

A Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry Into Positive Involvement Trends of
Contemporary Fathers and Influence of Parenting Programs

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Abstract

Parent education programs offered by a variety of public health services are effective support and knowledge resources that enhance positive parenting competencies in early childhood and adolescence. However, parenting education programs are less effective and encompass fewer benefits for fathers in comparison to mothers. This study sought to investigate trends of paternal involvement in early childhood and to compare the influence of parenting education programs on paternal involvement and conceptualization of fathers. A sample of 52 fathers, between the ages of 19 to 54, with children 6 years old and younger completed an electronic or hard copy version of a survey questionnaire reporting on their fathering and experiences as a dad. Findings indicate the sample of Canadian fathers self-reported high levels of paternal involvement, including many who favoured play-based interactions with their children. Although no significant difference in levels of involvement was noted between fathers who had versus those who had not previously participated in a parenting education program, half of the Canadian fathers indicated that supports are needed to strengthen their role as fathers. Results suggest that future initiatives to strengthen parent education program services available in Canada should specifically consider the father's role.

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CHAPTER ONE: CONCEPTUALIZING FATHERHOOD

Fathers are recognized as valuable contributors to child development within literature and society. Studies that have examined fathers' involvement in their children's lives may have created the perception that fathers were what Saracho and Spodek (2008) referred to as the "hidden parent" (p. 821). According to Pleck (2007) social science research uses the term *fatherhood* in two related but different ways corresponding to two distinct branches of research. Typically research has examined fatherhood as a fertility status and as the behaviour and identity enacted by men who have children. Fatherhood as a fertility status encompasses research that focuses on topics that include the predictors of whether and when men have biological, adoptive, and step children and the relationship or union of these transitions. The second branch of fatherhood research focuses on fatherhood as a behaviour and identity, normally examining what men who are fathers do and experience in their role as a parent.

There is a growing concern and emphasis in developmental science research to highlight the importance of fathers on child development. Fathers and mothers tend to spend more time with their young children than they do with adolescents (Hofferth, Pleck, Stueve, Bianchi, & Sayer, 2002). The relationship between infants and fathers is pertinent in early stages of life and depends on the quality of the responsiveness and the amount of interaction with the infant (Lamb, 2002). Factors that can affect a father's motivation to be involved with their children range from family structure to social, demographic (see Hofferth et al., 2002), and beliefs and commitment (see Guzzo, 2011).

Benefits of the Engaged Father

The value of a positively engaged and involved father is good for the child, father, mother, and family development (Allen & Daly, 2007). Lamb, Pleck, Charnov, and Levine (1985) took the initiative in defining paternal involvement in three helpful components: (a) the father's interaction or engagement with his children, (b) the father's availability to his children, and (c) the degree of responsibility that he assumes for his children. Hawkins et al. (2002) decided to improve the construct of father involvement and move beyond observable interactions. Hawkins and his colleagues operationally define and conceptualize father involvement as a multidimensional construct that includes affective, cognitive, and ethical components in addition to behavioural observable components.

There are many benefits that are related to the involvement of positively engaged fathers with their children in the areas of the child's cognitive, emotional, social development, and well-being. In the early years of infancy, the higher the interaction the father has in caregiving activities, the higher the child's cognitive abilities. For instance, Yogman, Kindlan, and Earls (1995) reported that highly involved fathers played a meaningful role as a play partner with their high-risk babies, and increase their IQ by age 3. Infants of fathers who engaged in more face-to-face interactions and object stimulation, rather than body contact and stimulation, were able to recognize themselves in the mirror at 3 months old (Borke, Lamm, Eickhorst, & Keller, 2007).

Another positive aspect of an engaged father can be found in the research of emotional development and well-being. According to Lamb (1977), fathers are just as likely as mothers to act as attachment figures. Since the infant may have different types

of experiences with fathers than mothers, the developmental outcomes are different but complementary (Lamb, 1977; Cox, Owen, Henderson, & Margand, 1992; Grossmann, Grossman, Fremmer-Bombik, Kindler, & Scheuerer-Englisch, 2002). Cox et al. (1992) noted that an infant's secure attachment to fathers in year 1 to 5 parallels the sensitivity of the maternal attachment in year 1. Infant attachment is also predictive of qualities in the father's attitudes and paternal role. This suggests that the more time the father spent with the infant, the more positive interactions they shared. In addition, children who had a father figure present were associated with better cognitive and emotional development, reporting higher social competence and fewer depressive symptoms and psychological distress (Dubowitz et al., 2001).

Research also indicates that there are several benefits for fathers to become more positively involved with their children. Men who are more involved have reported feeling more confident and effective in their parenting. Cox et al. (1992) reported that the more time the father spent with the infant, the more positive interactions they shared. Spending more time with the child provides the father with more opportunity to display affection and nurture the child, and father-adolescent interactions are associated with more acceptance (Almeida & Galambos, 1991). Eggebeen and Knoester (2001) explored fatherhood from all types of experiences, and specifically the associations that exist between men's involvement with their children and men's psychological health and behaviour. Men who were more engaged with biological, adopted, step, and non-resident children noted a higher level of satisfaction in their lives and more socialization within their communities. Although Pleck and Masciadrelli (2004) document that there are short-term costs that are associated with father involvement, including stress and

increased work and family conflict, it did not appear to reduce the overall satisfaction of parenthood.

Many benefits are related to positively engaged fathers and the quality of relationship that exists between the mother and father. For instance, Krishnakumar and Black (2003) evaluated the family processes that were associated with parenting efficacy. Mothers' satisfaction was positively associated with the paternal involvement over time. Parenting efficacy for mothers is contingent with the relationship with fathers and is associated with the role of the father and the quality of relationships. External and contextual factors influence the quality of parenting and the amount of stress that arises from lack of knowledge and support, which can interfere with the mother's ability to parent (Hoffman, 2011).

The remainder of chapter 1 will outline the background of the problem in the role of the 21st century father and the influence on the changing conceptualization of the father, the lack of preparation involved in the transition into and through parenthood for fathers, and the absence of paternal involvement outcomes and participation in parenting programs.

Background of the Problem

The background of the problem is attributed to the contemporary construction of father involvement, the lack of support allotted to the transition into and within fatherhood, the definition of positive parenting, and the potential of parenting education programs to impact fathers.

Construction of the Contemporary 21st Century Father

Contemporary societal ideals challenge men to share parental responsibilities with their spouses and to care and nurture their own children. Yet, there is a paradox that exists between the desire to develop a strong identity and sense of responsibility, and the lack of reinforcement and support that exists as men transition into and within fatherhood within the social context. Juby and Le Bourdais's research (1998) highlighted that there are many transitions within fatherhood that stem from changes in relationship status, and an increase in fragile marital relationships result in more complex paternal life course.

According to Lamb (2000), all the images and functions identified by family historians "remain important today, although the extent of their importance varies across cultural, ethnic, religious, and social class groups" (p. 37). In a pluralistic society, there are various roles of a father that can coexist. Although an active and nurturing father has been advocated for in the last decade, each individual carries a very different concept of fathering based on one's culture. Popular culture in Canada tends to depict diverse groups of men enjoying certain patriarchal dividends. Ball and Daly (2012) explain that women are taking up co-parenting roles as providers for their children, yet caring for a child is publicly depicted as a choice for fathers and a necessity of mothers. Popular media depicts images of fathers discarding childcare responsibilities for work, sports, or personal gratifications (Ball & Daly, 2012). More specifically, while women are frequently depicted as willing to be involved in child care, there is doubt as to how much and what aspects of childcare involves the father (Schoppe-Sullivan, Brown, Cannon, Mangelsdorf, & Sokolowski, 2008). Therefore, the active father must be viewed from

within the social, cultural, and situational context, and from multiple activities that fathers can undertake for and with their children.

The most striking feature of father involvement is how it is conceptualized in combination with many diverse functions for a vast number of individuals of different subcultures. The variability of the definition and conceptualization of fatherhood highlights differences compared to the core features of mothering-nurturance and protection (Lamb, 2000). Thus, a universally recognized and greater consensus exists for “good mothers” than “good fathers,” and the same performances within fatherhood can be deemed successful and unsuccessful, depending on the context. The goal of Canadian research is to extend beyond the heterosexual Euro-western normative and ideals of fatherhood, and to expand the research focus outside of the normative gaze. For instance, in line with challenging the heteronormative thinking, gay and queer fathers have gained momentum in the fathering literature. Although the 21st century has given rise to mixed recognition of same-sex partners, Biblarz and Stacey (2010) report that, compared to heterosexual couples, children of same-sex parents show higher self-esteem, better mental health, less traditional stereotyping, better communication between parents, and more empathy towards social diversity. However, for the parameters of this study, same-sex partners were not explored. Therefore, the conformity within Canadian society to these new norms on father involvement is varied and less assured, and low conformity can result. A weak understanding of the role or when the behaviour is conditional or a secondary achievement, it weakens conformity (Harris & Morgan, 1991).

Transition Into Versus Within Fatherhood

The roles of fathers and fatherhood are views that are constructed over many years, and the transition for males into fatherhood and father development is not clearly understood. How is the 21st century society preparing males for the role of the *modern father*? How are young men being educated on parenting and the role of fathers as a husband and parent, and how are they being supported?

Most men approach parenthood with the intention and expectation of being emotionally involved and deeply connected to their infant, expressing positive views of fathering with the desire to love, to protect, and to be there for their children (Goodman, 2005). Goodman's (2005) meta-analysis study noted a desire to parent differently than how their own fathers had parented them. The fathers surveyed perceived their own fathers as being distant and disengaged from the family (Goodman, 2005). Interestingly, shortly after the birth of their children, the fathers noted that there was an uncomfortable realization that life had unexpected changes and their expectations had been unrealistic and inconsistent with the realities that followed in the early weeks after the birth. As a result, the men had realized that they had lacked skills, experiences, support, time, and the recognition they needed for fathering, and that they had few or no role models or guidelines to help them develop as active, positive fathers (Goodman, 2005). Therefore, the transition for men into the new role of engagement and involvement into parenthood is a sensitive period when fathers may need the most support.

Thus, the role making process for men is often a process of trial and error in response to the needs and limits of the family (Goodman, 2005). An Invest in Kids Foundation survey of more than 2,500 Canadian partnered parents revealed that fathers

primarily depended on their partners for support, while mothers were more likely to draw support from multiple sources; yet, fewer fathers (46%) than mothers (55%) reported feeling highly supported by their own parents (as cited in Hoffman, 2011).

Several early father support groups are beginning to emerge—including More than a Hair Cut, and DADS Canada for separated or divorced fathers—but the support available for mothers is far more abundant especially for those with infants and preschoolers (Hoffman, 2011). For instance, new-mother networks are available across Ontario to support parenting, including the Moms and Tots groups, where they can share birthing stories, play groups, mommy blogs, and parenting forums to share advice and concerns of parenting, and exclude fathers (Hoffman, 2011).

The transition within fatherhood is a less-explored area of research. These concerns are related to timing of fatherhood, and the lack of singular endpoint or tasks that define competent, supportive fathering (Palkovitz & Palm, 2009). Palkovitz and Palm (2009) highlighted that the relationship between father and child is not static; it calls for multiple adjustments to their cognitive and behavioural engagement with their families. St John, Cameron, and McVeigh (2005) conducted a study that explored the experiences and life changes that occurred early in the first few weeks of fatherhood. The fathers in the study found fatherhood to be rewarding, yet challenging. The fathers found that they were negotiating responsibilities and balancing different activities—specifically work and family and revisiting how they perceived themselves as fathers. St John et al. highlight a window of constant change and readjustment of the father's life to maintain engagement with family. Therefore, there is a need to approach fatherhood through

macrosystems (i.e., social policies) and microsystems (i.e., practices within fatherhood programming) that support positive transitions in fathering.

Positive Parenting

Positive child developmental outcomes appear strongly correlated with certain parenting behaviours. There are three typologies of parenting behaviours: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting, which are associated with different patterns of parenting and child outcomes (Baumrind, 1971). Authoritarian parenting is associated with rejection, restrictive of child's autonomy, and demanding behaviour patterns. Permissive parenting is associated with warmth and responsiveness to the child, but undemanding behaviour patterns. Authoritative parenting is associated with the balance between warmth and responsiveness behaviours, and demanding and restrictiveness behaviours (Baumrind, 1971). This type of parenting is associated with emotional support and warmth, autonomy granting, and clear, bidirectional communication (Baumrind, 1978). Authoritative parenting is associated with positive child development outcomes including greater social responsibility, academic achievement, and lower levels of internalizing and externalizing behaviours (Campana, Henderson, Stolberg, & Schum, 2008). Authoritative parenting is recognized as positive parenting. Maccoby and Martin (1983) defined positive parenting as a pattern of attitudes and behaviours that foster acceptance, warmth, and high involvement. Positive parenting is the source of good parent-child relationships and parallels healthy attachment between the parent and the child. In contrast, negative parenting is associated with negative behaviour from the parent, the parent's personality, and support/marital relationships (Russell, 1997).

Prior to the emergence of fathering research, parenting research focused overwhelmingly on maternal parenting and had not adequately considered paternal contributions (Cabrera et al., 2000). Yet, it is now widely accepted that fathers' parenting has an important influence on children's development and that fathers' parenting style is separate than that of the mothers (Grossman et al., 2002). Winsler, Madigan, and Aquilino (2005) explored the limitation in parenting style research in that it exclusively focuses on maternal parenting styles, and mother and father parenting styles are conceptualized as being different yet interdependent.

Parenting Programs and Participation of Fathers

The programs available to educate fathers are continually being developed. Fathers recognize programs that emphasize father-child activity programs as most popular. These programs typically emphasize activity-based and are orientated around father-child interactions. For instance, the "Dad and Me" programs are typical of this father-child interaction (Hoffman, 2011) and include a variety of themes—science, cooking, building—for father and child. The findings from a 2011 Canadian Fathers' Program Survey highlight that 72% of programs available for fathers focus primarily on father-child activities and parenting skills (Hoffman, 2011). Some of these programs include "Caring Dads" for families involved in the child protection system, and "More than Just a Hair Cut" in Toronto for the Black community programming based on social tradition. "Supporting Father Involvement" is a program developed in California and targets the couple's relationship, to indirectly improve father involvement and parenting skills. However, other researchers have recently encouraged father involvement in parenting education programs, collectively with mothers, based on the assumptions that

fathers play an important role in both the social and emotional development of their children (Burbach, Fox, & Nicholson, 2004).

A variety of positive parenting initiatives exist in Canada at national, provincial, and local levels (e.g., “Be a Great Parent” in the Niagara Region; “Fathers Groups Pilot Project” within the region of Hamilton; and “Comfort, Play, Teach” within the region of Toronto) and a variety of parent education programs that are available through public health agencies and partners to ensure these policies are fulfilled (Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion [OMHP], 2010). Some of these parenting group sessions include the “Triple P Positive Parenting” program in regions of Niagara, Halton, and Sudbury; “Incredible Years Parent, Teacher and Children” in the region of Toronto; “Nobody’s Perfect” through a number of public health units; “Baby Talk” in the region of Niagara; and “Make the Connection” in Toronto (OMHP, 2010). However, the majority of parenting education programs that include fathers highlight group interactions, but typically these programs are developed and modeled on maternal interventions and interactions for attachment, care, and others (Doherty, Erickson, & LaRossa, 2006; Matthey & Barnett, 1999). A large sample of parenting literature calls for the systematic inclusion of fathers and address the fathers’ needs (Cabrera et al., 2000) because parent education programs fail to meet the needs of the other half of the parent population—the fathers. For instance, the “Triple P Positive Parenting” was developed for the purpose of strengthening parent competencies and improves parent–child interactions. Although the programs have been reported to improve parental perceptions and parenting skills, the majority of the data reported come from mother samples. The attrition rates in these programs are higher for fathers than they are for mothers. Few reports address the direct

effects of the paternal participation in these programs (Fletcher, Freeman, & Matthey, 2011). All formats of the program (i.e., standard Triple P, Enhance Triple P, Group Triple P) were also examined and revealed that mothers showed an improvement in their parenting style in all formats, and fathers also showed a positive improvement though less so than the mothers (Fletcher et al., 2011).

Generally, authors of parenting literature describe that the current focus of fathering programs is needed to educate fathers during the prenatal period as well, which is important for the transition into fatherhood. Fathers often feel a strong sense of responsibility and are prepared to take the active role in parenting but lack the competence, support, and recognition they need to be fathers (Goodman, 2005). Deave and Johnson (2008) highlight the importance of educating and supporting fathers as they transition into fatherhood during this time of identity and relationship development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose is to investigate the trends of paternal involvement of fathers with children 6 years old and younger, and to compare the influence of parenting education programs on the paternal involvement dimensions (e.g., mother support, time and talking together) and conceptualization of a father.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What dimensions of father involvement challenge the contemporary father and how do the dimensions of father involvement impact each other?
2. How do fathers conceptualize their role as parent?

3. How does the conceptualization of the role of the father impact father involvement?

Rationale

The Invest in Kids Foundation found that 92% of Canadian parents and 90% of married fathers of young children strongly agreed that being a parent was the most important thing that they can do (Oldershaw, 2002). Approximately 79% of parents strongly agreed that the years from birth through age 5 were critical for the way children turn out as adults. Although 84% of all parents strongly agreed to the influence of parents as critical agents in the early years of the child and as a future adult, only 73% felt that fathers were critical in this influence, as opposed to 82% of parents that felt mothers were critical for future development. Research and the community assessments address and recognize evident adverse developmental outcomes of children that are associated with poor parenting behaviours and family conflict, including drug abuse, delinquency, and academic underachievement (Aldous & Mulligan, 2002; Campana et al., 2008; Dubowitz et al., 2001; Howard et al., 2006; Lieberman et al., 2003; Sanders, 2003).

Thus, a universally recognized and greater consensus exists more often for “good mothers” than “good fathers,” and the same performances within fatherhood can be deemed successful and unsuccessful, depending on the context. Father involvement has been shaped by the social and economic cultures displaying a diverse range of “good fathering” over the last century (Harris & Morgan, 1991; Lamb, 2000; Pleck, 2004; Stearns, 1990). Currently, society ideals challenge contemporary men to share parental responsibilities with their spouses and to care for and nurture their own children; and in support of these expectations, it is recognized that fathers’ parenting has an important and

separate influence on children's development than that of mothers' parenting (Grossmann et al., 2002). Invest in Kids showed that fathers want to be involved with their children, but lack knowledge and confidence (Oldershaw, 2002). Married fathers responded that they had the most knowledge in the area of physical development but least in the areas of social, emotional, and intellectual development; yet, they recognized that such areas of development were the most influenced by parents.

The OMHP's Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) as the guidelines for the provision of mandatory health programs, including the Child Health program and services. The goal of the Child Health program is to enable all children to attain and sustain optimal health and developmental potential. The achievement of this goal involves a complex interplay of internal and external factors for families and their children (OMHP, 2010). Specifically, one of the key areas highlighted in the OPHS is positive parenting. Only one-third of Canadian parents use positive parenting approaches and the remaining two-thirds of parents do not (OMHP, 2010). Canadian parenting research approached parenting practice from various dimensions: positive/warm interaction, consistent parenting, hostile or ineffective parenting, and aversive parenting (Oldershaw, 2002; Statistics Canada, 2010). Based on these dimensions, positive parenting is defined as "positive/warm and consistent parenting interactions with the child (e.g., parents frequently talk, play, praise, laugh and do special things together with their children, have clear and consistent expectations and use non-punitive consequences with regard to child behaviour)" (OMHP, 2010, p. 19).

Parent education programs have emerged providing necessary resources and tools for parents to foster this parenting style. Traditionally, men have not received the same

foundation for parenting as women have, from either formal education or family socialization, which alludes to the idea that fathers are less likely to be primed for parenthood (Levant & Doyle, 1983). Similarly, past research on parent education programs highlight that parent training was synonymous with mother training consistent with the past emphasis on mothers being the primary caregiver (Lamb, 2000; Lundahl, Tollefson, Risser, & Lovejoy, 2008; Meyers, 1993), and current assumptions of parents in parenting literature (Campana et al., 2008; Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Current analysis of a variety of parent education programs reveals that the participation by mothers and fathers is not equal as there are a greater number of mothers participating and lower attrition rates for mothers than fathers. The research highlights significant benefits of the programs and findings suggest that programs have a greater positive effect on mothers' than on fathers' parenting practices (Fletcher et al., 2011; Lundahl et al., 2008).

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The scope of the study encompassed the influence of parent education programs on the dimensions of paternal involvement self-perceptions and presupposed a number of assumptions. The first assumption was parent education programs were a variable of paternal involvement. Second, it was assumed that the parent education variable encompassed the holistic value of the program, including content, community support, and environment. Third, this study assumed that the nine paternal dimensions of father involvement overlapped with the dimensions of positive parenting to some degree and they were equally important between the ages of 0 and 6.

This study had several limitations. A cross-sectional design was applied and thus the study is limited and unable to address research questions about the role of the father

and children of different ages. The cross-sectional study addresses only proximal issues and did not yield results about how transforming these experiences would happen over time. Second, the paternal involvement diversity of the participants is limited to the sites of sampling, due to the required degree of involvement of parents at these locations.

Outline of the Remainder of the Document

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature to support past research of this investigation. Chapter 3 discusses details about the research design, the selection of participants, research procedures, and the methodological assumptions and limitations. Chapter 4 discusses the quantitative results, qualitative results, and triangulation of results, using a transformative model, of the mixed methods study. Finally, chapter 5 discusses the significance of the results, the responses to the research questions, and the implications of this study in practice, theory, and future research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter outlines an overview of the literature that defines father involvement and the role of the father, positive parenting, and the implications of parenting education programs. These concepts are reviewed under a theory and practice, and the implications of further application of these concepts of findings to practice. The chapter also presents Figure 1 that shows the relationship of the factors corresponding to father involvement.

Introduction to Father Involvement

The literature on father involvement is outlined to define and construct father involvement and the important role that father involvement plays in child development. Several theoretical concepts of father involvement highlight its multidimensional orientation and implications.

Defining Father Involvement

The following section outlines the importance of father involvement on child development and the history of “good fathering” in the 20th century.

Why define father involvement? It is important to situate father involvement within the context of child development (see Figure 1). Parenting research in the past has typically focused more on mother than on father involvement, ultimately dampening the importance of father involvement on child development. The importance and impact of father involvement has received more attention as a result of the increasing recognition of separate but equally important influences on child development (Grossman et al., 2002). Child development is influenced by both the quality and quantity of father involvement and care, and high levels of father involvement lead to a high variety of desirable outcomes (Wilson & Prior, 2011).

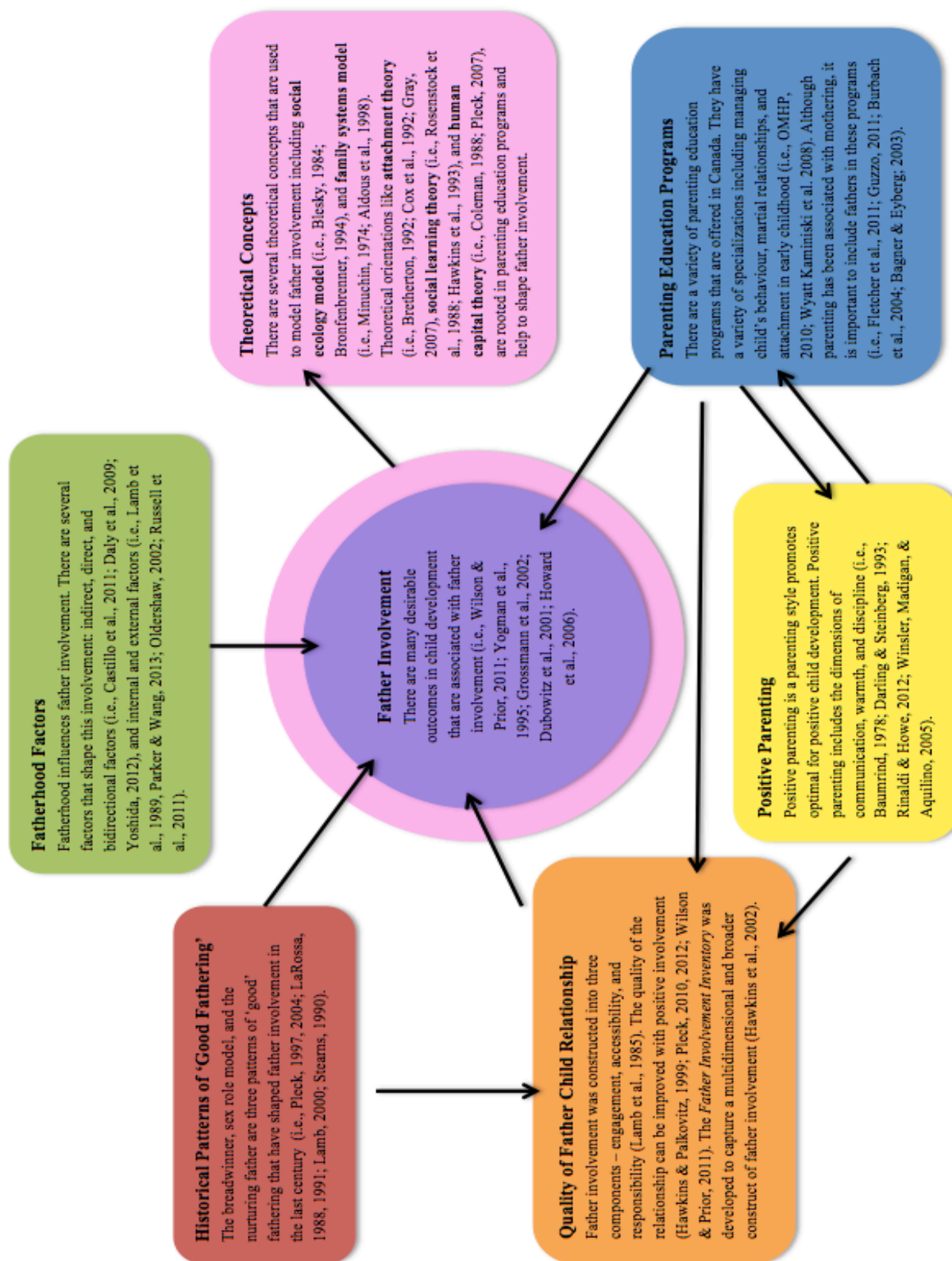


Figure 1. Factors and concepts associated with father involvement and parenting education programs.

Some desirable outcomes include better psychological adjustment for children that leads to better mental health as adults; higher levels of cognitive competence; better academic progress and fewer school adjustment difficulties; and an increase in social responsibility, capacity for empathy, self-control, self-esteem, and life skills—to name a few (Dubowitz et al., 2001; Grossmann et al., 2002; Howard et al., 2006; Wilson & Prior, 2011; Yogman et al., 1995).

Historical patterns of father involvement. The significance of the father's role in child development has undergone dramatic historical shifts in the literature impacting how fatherhood is conceptualized and shape the role of father involvement throughout the 20th century (see Figure 1). Several social and economical shifts in history need to be identified to better understand father involvement.

The terms “good father” and “involved father” are used interchangeably in the literature, suggesting that there is a positive nature and outcome of father involvement. However, the good father is often influenced by interpersonal, individual, and cultural factors, and using a label such as the *good father* is very value loaded and prescriptive (Marsiglio, Day, & Lamb, 2000). Frank Furstenberg (1988) introduced the “Good Dads-Bad Dads: Two faces of fatherhood” complex, and the idea that the concept of a good father has been shaped and constructed by various social and cultural changes (as cited in Pleck, 2004). Throughout history, good fathering has been emphasized in light of socially approved and culturally dominant ideals of fatherhood. Thus, these images and ideals of father involvement were typically constructed using the middle-upper class of intact marriages that illustrated the provider father and caregiving mother, while single, adoptive, or stepfathers were rarely considered in this research (Pleck, 2004).

Many researchers have written about the history of fatherhood in the United States of America (U.S.) and the reflected patterns of father involvement in popular culture during those times that have surfaced in the investigation (LaRossa, 1988; Pleck, 1997). In the last century, three patterns of involvement of fathers have been identified in the American history of fatherhood. The three patterns of father involvement include the role of the breadwinner, the sex role model, and more recently the new nurturing father (Lamb, 2000; Pleck, 1997). LaRossa, Gordon, Wilson, Bairan, and Jaret (1991) argue that these changes in popular culture have ultimately resulted in the glorification of motherhood and dwindling of fatherhood.

The industrial revolution marks the first shift in the image of the father in the early 20th century, and a time when “fatherhood was radically transformed” (Stearns, 1990, p. 49). During this time, the father was conceptualized as a distant breadwinner or provider. This conceptualization of the role continued until the Great Depression in the 1930s (LaRossa, 1988; Lamb, 2000). The responsibility of a breadwinner was to earn enough money to support a family, which became a classic male obligation of the working class, and business and professional men (Stearns, 1990). Lamb (2000) identifies that through popular literature of the time and written letters, the dominant conception of fathers was that of a breadwinner. Other aspects of fatherhood were not dismissed, including responsibility for moral guardianship, but the focus and primary objective of the role of the father after industrialization was that of a breadwinner. The industrial revolution had reduced the importance of subsistence agriculture and home industries, and forced the separation between the home and work outside the home creating two realms of ideologies—the public/occupational world and the private/family world.

Furthermore, the importance of the role of the father as a provider had great merit during this time in the progressive downfall of economic environment, and even middle class families found it difficult to maintain family standards (Stearns, 1990). Often, females resided in homes with the family, while males left their small farms and businesses to seek employment away from home in the emerging industrial economy (Pleck, 1997). The implications of this new role as a father reduced the amount of time urban fathers spent with their children, and boyhood was now spent at a greater distance from the adult male role models than had traditionally been foundational to child development (Stearns, 1990). Mothers' constant presence with their children as a primary caregiver fostered the assumption that a father had little impact on child development (Cabrera et al., 2000). Men's ability to reinforce gender identity in family life was restricted as a result of these primary work obligations (Stearns, 1990). Thus, the importance of breadwinning was characteristic of fatherhood and the essential and determining criterion for the "good father" prior to the 1920s.

The end of the industrial revolution marked an increase in the number of men and women at work (Stearns, 1990). This increase is thought to be a result of an increase in new technology and education levels of workers. There was increased mingling among men and women within society, and in particular the co-education movement within schooling began in 1900, effectively moving towards the minimization of traditional roles of women and men in education and workplace. Women were hired during the First World War, but were quickly replaced upon the return of the men (Stearns, 1990). Although they were just as skilled for these positions as most men were in blue-collar work, the emphasis of the male breadwinner ideal overrode these concerns. In the 1920s

and 1930s, although work equality was still a distant goal, women workers began to be preferred over two groups of men: the young and the old. These views were supported by the American film industry in the 1930s that occasionally featured a career woman in their films, in addition to films featuring the usual happy family with an achieving husband and supportive wife (Stearns, 1990).

After the Great Depression and the Second World War, there was much disruption and dislocation that emerged within the family unit (Pleck 1997). These events helped to identify and label a new conceptualization of the father as a sex-role model, and it was strived for in popular literature of the time. Although the role of the breadwinner and moral guardian remained important during this time, this role was extended further to focus in the role as a sex-role model, particularly for their sons (Pleck 1997). The rationale behind increasing father involvement was rooted in a fear of effeminate boys in western culture. For instance, young men who failed physical exams during the Second World War led to assumptions that mothers were overly caring, and absent fathers made men weak (Griswold, 1993). In addition, early drafting of fathers for war was considered the root of psychological problems for children and adolescents. The opponents of drafting also argued that a change in the labour force had forced mothers to work away from home while fathers were drafted in the war, which left children and adolescent alone and to rebel, resulting in juvenile delinquency (Griswold, 1993). Parental involvement was the solution to the problems that arose from the war (Strecker, 1946). Although the professional and popular literature surfacing during this period focused on the need for and encouraged strong sex-role models and father

involvement, researchers (e.g., Strecker, 1946) concluded that fathers were clearly not doing a good job in that regard.

The inadequate and incompetent behaviour exhibited by fathers was also reflected in popular culture during this historical time (LaRossa et al., 1991). More specifically, a sample of family cartoons that were featured in the *Saturday Evening Post* from 1924 to 1944 were analyzed by LaRossa et al. (1991) for any depictions of incompetence of both the mother figures and father figures. The study replicated a previous study by Day and Mackey (1986) that compared the depiction of incompetence of father figures in the earlier part of the century to the later part of the century between 1971 and 1978. Day and Mackey concluded that fathers were more likely to be depicted as incompetent. However, LaRossa et al. determined that in the early half of the 20th century, fathers in family cartoons were depicted as more incompetent, but the likelihood of mothers depicted as incompetent converged towards the middle of the century. Nonetheless, the researchers supported that the inadequacy of fathers as role models was portrayed and ridiculed in dramatic works that include *Rebel Without a Cause*, *Blondie*, and *All in the Family* (Ehrenreich & English, 1979).

Continuing into the 1950s, there was more of a demand by mothers for fathers to become more involved as wives embraced an expanded ideal of domesticity, which included backyard barbecues and repairs in the basement workshop (Rutherford, 1999). During this period, middle-class men and women were doing more together within and outside the family (Rutherford, 1999; Stearns, 1990). As a result of the baby boom and larger families, this period presented an outward conformity and emphasis on fathers to promote gender roles. Fathers were encouraged to spend more time with infants and

children, and to develop a good relationship with their grown children (Pleck, 2004). For example, fathers were encouraged to develop sons that were heterosexual and married, and to make their daughters feel feminine while also providing a role model of a good husband (Weiss, 1999).

Nonetheless, the feminist movement surfaced and during the 1970s women started to insist that fathers participate equally in child rearing as a part of egalitarian relationship between husband and wives (Pleck, 1987; Rotundo, 1985). Similar terms like the “androgynous father” (Rotundo, 1985) and “newer father” (Pleck, 1987) have emerged to define the new modern, egalitarian father in equal participation in parenting. As a result of this movement towards a more egalitarian father, Sandberg and Hofferth (2001) examined the time American children spent with their parents between 1981 and 1997. The change in time children spent with their parents was attributed to the changing patterns of female labour in the work force participation, family structure, and parental education. Similarly, Cabrera et al. (2000) highlight four important social trends that have changed the social cultural context in which children develop: (a) women’s increased labour force participation, (b) increased absence of non-residential fathers in the lives of their children, (c) increased father involvement within intact families, and (d) increased cultural diversity. These changes will ultimately effect how children today will construct their expectations about the roles of fathers and mothers, as they become parents.

Fatherhood and father involvement. Prior to constructing the modern definition of father involvement, it is important to recognize that father involvement cannot be discussed without highlighting that the terms fatherhood and father involvement are inextricably interwoven. The terms father involvement and fatherhood have implications

that they share with children and the family. Specifically, there are diverse and complex perceptions of fatherhood that affect paternal involvement. For instance the variability that exists in fatherhood (e.g., ethnicity, age, children, employment) parallels the diversity that exists in father involvement (Marsiglio et al., 2000). However, with this in mind, the previous few decades have attempted to shape and advance the definition and construct of father involvement beyond the inflexibility and observable phenomenon of linear time that is often associated with the term of father involvement. Hofferth et al. (2002) began defining father involvement with two important aspects: (a) the time parents spend with children engaging with them, accessibility to them, and responsibilities, and (b) the quality of the relationship.

Father Involvement as a Time Construct

Lamb et al. (1985) proposed a construct of paternal involvement. The three components highlighted in the construct are engagement, accessibility, and responsibility. *Engagement*, or interaction, is the direct contact a father has with his children. Considering the role of the father has changed over the last three decades, the new father is expected to spend more time interacting with his child on an emotional and physical level. Data collected between the 1960s to the 1980s depict an increase in paternal involvement, yet mother involvement was still higher than that of father involvement (Lamb et al., 1985). Previous research highlights that two-parent families had shown levels of engagement by fathers with young children of about 2 to 2.8 hours per day, not distinguishing type of day (Pleck, 1997). Generally, fathers (and mothers) spend more time with young children than with adolescents (Hofferth et al., 2002). Psychologists emphasize the importance of paternal engagement on child development, and more

importantly the increased concern on the nature of the interaction and activities between father and child. The nature of this interaction can include one-on-one activities with the child through playing, reading, or feeding (Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999).

More specifically, the term *positive engagement* emerged to conceptualize and assess the quality in the frequency of interaction as a result of the types of activities that were more likely to promote development (Pleck, 1997). Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean, and Hofferth (2001) highlighted that about 39% of U.S. children's time engaged with their fathers is spent in play and companionship on a weekday or weekend day. Yet, children's household work and social activities comprised a smaller fraction of time spent engaged with their fathers (15% during the weekday and 30% on the weekend). Lastly, only about 3% to 5% of the time children engaged with their fathers was time spent learning or focused on educational activities. Research in Canada on engaged father involvement is scarce, and thus is not clear on the proportion of time fathers engage in play, household and care, and education with their children.

Accessibility is a second construct defining father involvement described by Lamb et al. (1985). Accessibility is the potential for the availability for engagement, whether the child is present or not present; for example, cooking in the kitchen while the child is in the next room playing or cooking in the kitchen while the child plays nearby (Lamb, 2000). Intuitively, accessibility is required and contingent with father involvement. Father involvement accessibility has received very little attention in the literature (Pleck, 2012).

Lastly, responsibility is the third component of the father involvement construct as described by Lamb et al. (1985). The construct of responsibility involves the indirect

time spent to ensure that the child is taken care of or has available resources. Fathers can assume responsibility for a wide variety of managerial and supervisory activities, including the care and welfare of the child in managing appointments, arranging transportation, coordinating with schools and selecting doctors, and child care programs (Cabrera et al., 2000; Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999). More recently, Pleck (2007) argues that paternal decision-making and monitoring need to be studied as components of the involvement construct. For instance, Sandberg (2000) showed that fathers take less responsibility than mothers, and fewer fathers take sole responsibility for any parenting tasks. In addition, fathers are more likely to share direct care with transporting children to activities, and the participation in choosing activities and child care programs, and less likely to share direct care when involving the purchasing of clothing and in selecting doctor visits.

Quantity or Quality of Time: What Matters More?

In general, the purpose of creating this construct of paternal involvement was to highlight components in fathering that had not previously been addressed in parenting research (Lamb et al., 1985), yet there exists an imbalance and ambiguity attached to this construct. The construct of father involvement in research revealed diverse methodological underpinnings that varied unequally across the three constructs. The engagement component proposed in the construct focused on the amount of time a father spent with his child and this component has gained considerable attention due to change in social concerns (see Figure 1). It is now widely accepted that fathers' parenting has an important and separate influence on children's development than that of mothers' parenting (Grossman et al., 2002). Therefore, there is a growing concern to focus on the

quality of the relationship between paternal behaviour and child development in father involvement research. The engagement component of the father involvement construct has been measured on a time scale and conceptualized as an observable quality, specifically measuring behaviours that have meaning to the sensorimotor stage of child development. However, this measurement ignores the cognitive and affective domains of father involvement (Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999).

Wilson and Prior (2011) highlight this debate between quality and quantity in father involvement research regarding the value of engagement. Some argue that a close relationship between child and father is related to more time spent interacting with their children, which is critical in order to develop sensitivity to the needs and characteristics of the child, and to learn parenting skills and confidence. Others claim that it is not time but instead the emotional domain of parenting that has beneficial effects. For example, spending a lot of time interacting with one's children in a critical and demeaning way may cause harm rather than good, leading to children demonstrating lower and less stable self-esteem than other children (Kernis, Brown, & Brody, 2000). Pleck (1997) notes that time diaries were the most effective way to measure engagement time of large samples in the United States and Europe. These large-scale time surveys were repeated on an ongoing basis to highlight the trends of engagement over time. However, using this method of measurement and conceptualization of father engagement research failed to document the association between engagement time and child outcome. Research within this field urges approaching father involvement with the tools on how father engagement can promote positive child development.

The accessibility component of the father involvement construct was measured as the time present with the child and not necessarily engaging with the child. For example, Arditti and Keith (1993) surveyed 212 divorced fathers regarding the relationship between father and child, quality of visitation, and payment of child support. The results of the study showed that fathers who had good relationships with their children before the divorce and live nearby were more likely to have joint custody and the frequent contact, and it was associated with better visitation quality and higher child support payment. The study highlights the importance of a combination of accessibility and responsibility in father involvement. However, very little attention is given to the construct of accessibility in the literature.

Finally, the responsibility component of father involvement is defined and measured according to the culture (Pleck, 2012). For instance, Newland et al. (2012) conducted a mixed-methods study that examined the differences in parent involvement perceptions and practices and context based on the gender, nationality and education level of the parents. Two sites were used to compare nationality on parental attitudes—the Midwestern U.S. and central Taiwan. The results of the study indicated that Taiwanese parents were more involved in caregiving but less involved in other types of play, leisure, and social activities compared to U.S. families. There was also less school involvement responsibilities illustrated by Taiwanese parents than U.S. families. The authors suggest that cultural differences in parental involvement are a result of extended family involvement, which extends back to differentiating between fatherhood and father involvement. Similarly to engagement, this component strongly highlights the temporal social concerns, yet fails to address the direct link between father responsibility and child

outcomes. Pleck (2012) highlights that Lamb and Pleck had not defined responsibility precisely and identifies two different definitions attached to the term: broad and narrow. Responsibility in terms of broad concerns encompasses overseeing the provision of care, while responsibility in terms of a narrow level about arranging for goods and services (Pleck, 2012).

Other studies (e.g., Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999; Schoppe-Sullivan, McBride, & Ho, 2004) found the need for multidimensional models that define father involvement, as challenges in fathering research continue to rise, including greater rise in non-resident fathering; greater attention to psychological, affective, ethical, economic, and spiritual dimensions of involvement; greater attention on father care for children (as opposed to mothers); and a greater attention on the meaning of paternal involvement rather than on the amount of time spent parenting.

Multidimensional Father Involvement Construct

The three constructs developed by Lamb et al. (1985) did not encompass all aspects of paternal behaviour important to children, and in response much attention was highlighted to conceptualize and measure father involvement. While there can be a hegemonic emphasis on time, Hawkins and Palkovitz (1999) emphasize the nature, meaning, and experiences of the activities encompassing instrumental, affective, social, ethical, and spiritual aspects of father involvement.

Pleck (2010) observed that much of the recent research in father involvement operationalized father involvement as warmth/responsiveness and control, which were concepts that were already established in parenting research. Several scholars have attempted to provide feedback to and support a new father involvement model. Hawkins

and Palkovitz (1999) illustrate that given the challenges and current problems, the corresponding action needed is to highlight other dimensions that exist in fathering in the 21st century. For instance, avoiding maternal comparisons calls for an inclusion of dimensions that are unique to men's involvement with children, or the problem of time calls for greater attention on inclusion of dimensions of behaviour that are ranked according to priority and meaning. Pleck (2010) suggests that the revised father involvement construct include three primary components: (a) positive engagement activities, (b) warmth/responsiveness, and (c) control that were developed to promote and encompass positive involvement and development. Two auxiliary domains also are included to redefine the responsibility component, which include (d) social and material indirect care, activities that parents do for their children and not with their children, and (e) the process of responsibility that includes the other four components.

Hawkins et al. (2002) recognized and initiated the response to the need for a richer and broader measure of the father involvement construct, and developed the *Inventory of Father Involvement (IFI)* (see Figure 1). Hawkins et al. (2002) constructed a nine-dimensional model of father involvement that measures instrumental and traditional dimensions (e.g., providing, support of the mother, disciplining and teaching responsibility, and encouraging success in school) in addition to dimensions that reflect tasks of a contemporary father (e.g., giving praise and affection, spending time together and talking, being attentive to their children's daily lives, reading to their children, and encouraging children to develop talents).

Theoretical Orientations of Fatherhood

Theoretical orientations are used to help explain the diverse paternal attitudes and beliefs in fatherhood involvement research in its relevance of this study. Two theoretical orientations express the variety of paternal attitudes and beliefs in fatherhood research and the realms of this study, and include family systems theory and social ecology model (see Figure 1).

Social Ecology Perspective

Bronfenbrenner (1977) defines social ecology as

The scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the life span, between a growing human organism and the changing immediate environments in which it lives, as this process is affected by relations obtaining within and between these immediate settings, as well as the larger social contexts, both formal and informal, in which the settings are embedded. (p. 514)

The social ecology model is a multilevel or multisystem perspective on human development. The model is distinct for its five levels or systems that contribute to human development. The ecological environment of five levels are a set of nested structures that fit inside of each other (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The five levels of the ecological model will be discussed further beginning with the innermost level (i.e., microsystem) to the outside level (i.e., chronosystem).

The microsystem is the innermost level and it is “a pattern of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 39) in settings that is face-to-face with interactions that have physical, social, and symbolic features and permit further interaction in the immediate

environment, such as co-parenting and parent–child interactions. Some of the settings may include the family, school, or workplace. Furthermore, this immediate environment is the proximal process that operates to produce and sustain development. Extending beyond the microsystem is the mesosystem that comprises the linkages between two or more settings containing a developing person, which include community-level dynamics in which the fathers are engaged. Some linkages include the relationship between home and school, school and the workplace, or home and the workplace (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The exosystem is also comprised of linkages between more than one setting, but at least one of these setting does not need to contain a developing person, permitted that these events occur and indirectly influence the immediate setting with the developing person. This may include institutions, policy, and legislation. These initial three levels comprise the next level of the ecological model: the macrosystem. The macrosystem is the overarching pattern of the initial three systems characteristic of a culture with a particular set of beliefs, knowledge, material resources, customs, lifestyles, and hazards (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Lastly, the final level is the chronosystem that encompasses “change or consistency over time not only in the characteristics of the person but also the environment in which that person lives” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 40). The types of changes or consistencies that may occur include socioeconomic status, employment, place of residence, and family structure (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

The significance of this model provided a framework for developmental research that fell outside of the classic mother–child research paradigm. In the 1970s and 1980s this model allowed a growing body of research to surface in the father-child relationship, the effects of children and their relationships with their siblings, peers, and teachers, the

relationship children between their parents, the effects of parents jobs, the effects of social policy concerning welfare, employment, and parental leave (Pleck, 2007). More specifically, Belsky's (1984) process model outlines three domains of parental functioning that are similar to the ecological model proposed by Urie Brofenbrenner. The purpose of the process model presumes that parental functioning had multiple determinants, including the sources of stresses and support that ultimately shape parenting and the parent-child relations. Pleck (2007) strategically highlights the overlap that exists between these two models, even though the same terminology is not used, drawing specific attention to the mesosystem (i.e., marital relationship) and exosystem (i.e., parents' jobs, social support networks) that influence the child and influence parenting.

Family Systems Theory

The family systems theory illustrates that there are transactional patterns that operate within the family structure. Transactions that are repeated establish patterns of how, when and to whom to relate which form the underpinnings of the family system (Minuchin, 1974). The family structure is "the invisible set of functional demands that organizes the ways in which family members interact" (Minuchin, 1974, p. 51). An example of a transactional pattern is when a mother tells her child to drink her juice box and the child obeys. This defines who the child is in relation to her mother within that context of time (Minuchin, 1974). The family system is resistant to change beyond a certain range and will maintain a preferred pattern as long as possible as a result of two transactional patterns of family behaviour. The first is the universal rules of governing family organization. For instance, there is a complementary rule that there is an

interdependency of husband and wife operating as a team in the family (Minuchin, 1974). The second is the mutual expectation of particular family members that are idiosyncratic that are buried within years of family negotiations around daily events (Minuchin, 1974). Therefore, the family system functions through subsystems.

All individuals and dyads (e.g., mother–child, husband–wife) are subsystems within the family. Generation, gender, interests, or function can be the basis of forming these subsystems (Minuchin, 1974). Several subsystems exist within the family, including spousal subsystem, parental subsystem, and sibling subsystem. Therefore, these subsystems can be subject to change depending on the situational context. Each subsystem has “specific tasks, or functions, vital to the family’s functioning” (Minuchin, 1974, p. 56). There are skills that are required for the spouse subsystem for tasks that are complementary and mutually accommodating. Minuchin (1974) describes this pattern as allowing your spouse to “give in” without feeling like they have “given up” which requires them to yield separateness to gain belonging. This symmetrical relationship may be harmed by a spouse’s insistence for independence. Furthermore, the parental subsystem is a new level of family formation and begins with the birth of the first child. The skills that are required for the tasks in this subsystem are centered on socializing a child without losing the support established in the spousal subsystem. The growth of the child demands autonomy and guidance of the parental system adopting new skills for tasks of socialization (Minuchin, 1974).

These subsystems can affect the function and interaction of other subsystems (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998). For instance, if the relationship between the mother and father is of poor quality (e.g., lack of communication, trust, and respect) the

relationship between the parent and the child can also be adversely affected (Monna & Gauthier, 2008). Rinaldi and Howe (2012) illustrate the importance of establishing complementary tasks and mutual accommodations in the spousal subsystem in the realm of parenting. For instance, permissive parenting of mothers and authoritarian parenting of fathers resulted in toddlers externalizing behaviours. These results suggest that parents with similar parenting styles contribute to a stable family system as opposed to parents with varying parenting styles. In addition, parents who are divorced or separated can deal with high levels of stress and conflict, which may contribute to the parenting challenges (Hoffman, 2011). Nonetheless, poor relationships between spouses can result in a poorly functioning parental subsystem of either parent and they can “experience damage to or even the loss of relationships with their children. For fathers, however, the risk is higher, largely because so many fathers live apart from and have considerably reduced contact with their children after divorce and separation” (p. 10).

Factors Influencing Father Involvement

Several factors influence father involvement and child outcomes. There are factors that can directly and indirectly influence father involvement. Factors that influence the degree of father involvement are attributed to both internal and external factors. Lamb et al. (1985) have proposed a psychological and ecological model of the determinants of the degree of father involvement that included motivation, skills and confidence, support, and institutional factors. In this model, motivation is defined as the fathers’ desire to be involved in the day-to-day care of their children and to provide for their children. In response to the perceived lack of skills of men (see Oldershaw, 2002), and smaller and isolated family structures (i.e., divorced/separated fathers, single fathers),

men are forced to learn parenting skills through trial and error or “on the job.” Also, the support a father needs to get involved and maintain this involvement is only likely if others approve of this behaviour (i.e., the primary caregiver), and often times they are not approved. Lastly, institutional practices may inhibit fathers’ opportunities to increase involvement with their children, which may indicate a psychological importance that work may lend to the fathers’ sense of identity (Lamb et al., 1985). For instance, employment status and attitudes about fathering can influence the degree of father involvement. The Pew Research Center (see Parker & Wang, 2013) explored the attitudes and beliefs of parents who try to balance work and family. Although only 50% of working fathers (and 56% of working mothers) reported finding it very to somewhat difficult to balance work and family responsibilities, 46% of fathers (and only 23% of mothers) with children under the age of 18 reported not spending enough time with their children, and the fathers reported devoting significantly less time to childcare than mothers.

Invest in Kids foundation surveyed 2,500 parents with only 900 fathers responding (as cited in Hoffman, 2011). The results highlighted that fathers perceived that society was more supportive for mothers than fathers and only 27% of fathers strongly agreed that Canada valued the roles of fathers. However, fathers who reported a high level of support from their partners were twice as likely to report optimal levels of positive parenting (Russell, Birnbaum, Avison, & Ioannone, 2011). In 2006, most fathers (94%) were employed full-time (Beaupré, Dryburgh, & Wendt, 2010). The workplace is an additional social support for fathers’ parenting responsibilities, including time and energy men need to attend to parenting responsibilities. Although personal and parental

leave have increased, there still remains considerable variation for support in the workplace for fathers (Lero et al., as cited in Hoffman, 2011).

In the realm of direct and indirect influences on father involvement, Castillo, Welch, and Sarver (2011) examined the relationship between the fathers' residential status, age, race and ethnicity, education attainment, financial status, and father involvement. Several studies highlight the relationship between father involvement and race and ethnicity, educational attainment, employment and income status, and residential status (e.g., Cabrera, Ryan, Mitchell, Shannon, & Tamis-LeMonda, 2008). The results of Castillo et al.'s study suggested that a father's age, race and ethnicity, and financial status are associated with the fathers' residency status and involvement with their children. Castillo et al. defined father involvement as a measure of the number of days in a week they participated with their children in eight activities, including singing songs and reading stories, which were then coded for participation. Specifically, the fathers who reside in the same home as their children were more likely to be involved. Castillo et al. found that the age of the father was strongly significant and that older fathers tended to be more involved than younger fathers. In addition, the authors highlight the importance of prenatal and early involvement by fathers and the predictive nature of involvement over time, and suggest that policy makers and program developers may want to consider implementing programs that support, young, non-resident fathers and their families.

Yoshida (2012) approached father involvement from a physical care of young children orientation, and investigated a national survey database of fathers who are married or cohabiting to examine factors associated with the physical care of young children under the age of 5. The results of the study showed that daily involvement is more likely if

individuals are the biological father, received more education, have an employed wife or partner, have a young male child, or receive public assistance. More specifically, there was more physical care with younger children than the school-aged children.

A variety of factors influence father involvement with children and as a result affect child development and outcome. However, this is not a unidirectional process; bidirectional influences can surface between the child outcome and father involvement, and this bidirectionality has become increasingly more recognized within father involvement literature. In recent years, parenting research has increasingly placed an emphasis on children as active agents in family life (Kuczynski, 2003). For instance, positive child behaviours may elicit greater father involvement. The bidirectional influence is emphasized in the Triple P Positive parenting programs and incorporated into their social learning models (Sanders, 2003). Moreover, Daly, Ashbourne, and Brown (2009) investigated a diverse sample of fathers and their perceptions of their children's influence. There were four themes emerged from Daly et al.'s study of children's influence on the orientation of (a) self and other, (b) shifts in the standards, (c) values, and (d) expectations, the experience of time, and on the effects of a parenting relationship.

Introduction to Parent Education Programs

The literature on parent education programs is used to highlight the importance of positive parenting and parent education programs available for parents of children under the age of 6 that ensure positive child development. Parent education programs model several theoretical concepts that highlight multidimensional perspectives and application to practice.

Defining Positive Parenting

An abundance of literature highlights several family risk factors (including poor parenting, family conflict, and marital status breakdown) that appear to be powerful early predictors for the development and maintenance of behavioural and emotional problems in children (Sanders, 2003). In association with parenting, the term “parenting styles” was introduced to describe the effect parenting behaviours and attitudes had on child development (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Baumrind (1978) identified three parenting styles that are associated with socialization behaviour of children: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting. Authoritarian parenting is commonly associated with the early 1940s whereby control was required to maintain high order within the household. This type of parenting is associated with dictatorship, parental power making uncompromising demands on children, and restricting the child’s autonomy. Permissive parenting challenges the legitimacy of the parental authority and parent control requires the parent to behave in an accepting and an affirmative manner towards the child’s impulses and actions. These parenting styles have contributed to negative externalizing and internalizing behaviours of children (Russell, 1997). Authoritative parenting is considered a positive parenting style because of its effect on positive child development; for example, academic success, competence, responsible independence, and psychosocial maturity (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). This type of parenting is associated with emotional support and warmth, autonomy granting and clear, bidirectional communication (Baumrind, 1978). (See Figure 1.)

Positive parenting is the optimal parenting style because of its direct relationship to positive child development. However, previous research (e.g., Rinaldi & Howe, 2012;

Winsler et al., 2005) has identified differences in parenting styles between fathers and mothers and the consequences on child development. Winsler, Madigan, and Aquilino (2005) explored the limitation in parenting style research in that it exclusively focuses on maternal parenting styles, and mother and father parenting styles are conceptualized as being different yet interdependent. Winsler et al. (2005) examined the inter-parental agreement on self-reported parenting styles for mothers and fathers, and the mothers' and fathers' perceptions of their spouses' parenting style. The results of the study revealed that the similarities between maternal and paternal parenting styles within the same family tended to be modest, with permissiveness and authoritarian demonstrating the highest correlation. However, the differences between mothers' and fathers' styles revealed that parents perceived there to be more differences between each other's styles than what was actually self-reported, and fathers tended to perceive more differences in parenting within the home than mothers. Mothers perceived themselves as more authoritative than their spouses; fathers perceived themselves as more authoritarian than mothers that are closely in line with traditional roles of the father. Therefore, the study highlighted the variance that exists between parents with younger children, and although there are more similarities than there are differences in parenting styles and positive parenting characteristics, it is the interaction between the parent and child that are different. For instance, the results of Newland, Coyl, and Freeman's (2008) study show that fathers enjoy physically playing with children, which is a paternal style that contributes to children's attachment security. Paquette (2004) described the emotional bond between fathers and children as an "activation relationship" (p.194) which develops

primarily through physical play, in contrast to the mothers' relationship to the child which may be more calming and comforting in times of stress.

Similarly, Rinaldi and Howe (2012) examined mothers' and fathers' reports of how their own and their spouses' parenting styles influenced their toddlers' externalizing, internalizing, and adaptive behaviours. The study revealed that there was a high correlation in individual similarities with their own parenting styles and their partner's parenting styles. There was a moderate significance between the mothers' reports of fathers' authoritative and authoritarian styles, and positive correlation with fathers' reports (except for permissiveness) that were not significant. These findings suggest that there is great variability in the interpretation of ineffective parenting. The results of Rinaldi and Howe's (2012) study also revealed that the mothers' and fathers' self-reported parenting styles explained 44% of the variance in children's externalizing behaviours, yet there was no significance of parenting styles and internalizing behaviours for both parents. Moreover, the study revealed that 11% of variance in children's adaptive behaviours was uniquely predicated by fathers' authoritative parenting style.

Newland et al. (2012) suggest that the differences in parent involvement, perceptions, and practices are a direct result of the parent gender, nationality, and education. For instance, in eastern cultures (i.e., specifically Taiwan) fathers tend to be less involved in play, leisure, or social activities with children than fathers in western culture (i.e., the U.S.); mothers (both in Taiwan and the U.S.) reported higher levels of parenting efficacy, greater parent-child closeness, and greater family and community support than fathers (Newland et al., 2012). Therefore, cumulatively, these studies

suggest that fathers do not seek information the same way that mothers do and the positive implications that parenting has on child development is misunderstood.

Societal expectations call for greater father involvement, and although there has been an increase in father involvement (e.g., unpaid work that includes child care and housework) over the last few decades (i.e., 1965 compared to 2011), the increase is small and mothers remain as the parent who spends the most time caring for their children (Parker & Wang, 2013). The Pew Research Center indicates that fathers are more likely than mothers to want to work full-time, and they strive for high paying jobs over flexibility of schedules, which mothers more often favour (Parker & Wang, 2013).

Defining Parent Education Programs

A variety of parenting education programs specialize in a range of targeted purposes. Some of the main focuses of parent education programs span across a wide spectrum of specializations including a general parenting education program, dealing with children's behaviour, parents' relationship, fathers as parents, and programs that specialize in attachment (see Figure 1). The term parenting education programs is synonymous with parent training programs. The initial premise for parent education programs emerged from the 1960s in an attempt to address children's problematic behaviour and focused on changing the child's undesirable behaviours to interventions the focused on changing the parents' behaviour (Wyatt Kaminiski, Valle, Filene, & Boyle, 2008). The majority of parent-training programs were based on the premise that "parenting practices contribute to the genesis, progression, and maintenance of disruptive behaviours across childhood" (Lundahl et al., 2008, p. 97). Parenting programs have since proliferated emphasizing different content, delivery setting, and techniques, and the

types of families that they serve. There is an increase in awareness of the importance in better preparation for parents because parents generally receive little preparation beyond being parented themselves, and learning through trial and error (Sanders et al., as cited in Sanders, 2003).

A variety and diversity of parenting programs have proliferated since these early days in collaboration with the board of health, community partners, services, and supports (OMHP, 2010). For example, the Triple P-Positive Parenting program, an evidence-based program, emerged from Australia and is currently delivered by a variety of health units including Halton Region, Niagara Regional Public Health, and Sudbury and District Health Unit. “Strong Start BC” is an early learning program for adults to support early learning of children at home starting at birth to age 5 and it is delivered by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia at Early Learning Centres. Parent–Child Mother Goose programs are offered at a variety of Vancouver Public Libraries and Toronto Public Libraries. “Incredible Years Parent, Teacher and Children,” an evidence-based program focused on strengthening parenting competencies delivered by Toronto Public Health; and “Nobody’s Perfect,” a parent education program of children age 0 to 5 that is delivered by a number of health units all over Canada.

In addition to parent education programs that are available throughout Canada, a variety of awareness strategies help inform the public of the benefits of positive parenting. For instance, the city of Hamilton has a Fathering Groups Pilot Project Evaluation specifically directed to fathers as parents and supporting positive child development; similarly. Similarly, “Be a Great Parent” is a positive parenting communication campaign delivered by the Niagara Region Public Health unit that

focuses primarily on parenting styles and aims to increase awareness of positive parenting dimensions (OMHP, 2010).

Importance of Including Fathers in Parenting Programs

The parenting programs that are delivered in Canada are available to mothers and fathers. The following literature highlights the importance of urging fathers to participate in parenting education programs. One of the ways that fathers are likely to receive parenting knowledge is through the role of their own fathers as a parent. Doherty et al. (1998) considered how men view fatherhood and noted that “a father’s relationship with his own father may be a factor-either through identifying with his father or compensating for his father’s lapses-in contributing to his own role identification, sense of commitment, and self-efficacy” (p. 288). Guzzo (2011) supports this notion and recognizes that while most males want to be good fathers, it is often their commitment and attitudes toward fatherhood that are reflected and influenced by the relationship and experiences with their own fathers. Nonetheless, there is much support through several parenting education programs available for mothers and fathers, including programs like the Triple P-Positive Parenting Programs that have been developed as intervening strategies that will enhance the competence and confidence of parents raising their children (Sanders, 2003).

Fathers who participate in specifically fathering programs have reported desirable and positive development child outcomes. Taskin and Erkan (2009) evaluated the effects of fathering education programs in Turkey on father involvement. The results of the study showed that fathers who participated in the father parenting programs increased the frequency of becoming more involved in their children’s games, going out with their

children, having verbal interactions, teaching them new things, and being involved in daily child care.

There is much debate over the context of parenting programs reckoning that parenting training thus far has been synonymous with mother training, with an emphasis on mothers as the primary socializing agent. Andrea Douchet's (2007) *Do Men Mother?* argues that although fathers' ways of caring for children are at times similar to those of mothers, they are at the same time quite different but just as equally valid. For instance, play and physical contact are more central to attachment and relationship building for fathers and child than they are with mothers. Douchet advocates that "while all these dimensions of caring are not normally part of what we consider nurturing behaviour, my argument is that all these elements are important aspects of the emotional responsibility for children" (as cited in Hoffman, 2011, p. 26).

Earlier research on the effectiveness of parenting education programs examined the effectiveness of father participation in these programs. Some researchers (Firestone, Kelly, & Fike, 1980) suggested that father participation in these parenting education programs was not necessary and reported that mothers were the only necessary primary agents for interacting with their children. However, other researchers have recently encouraged father involvement in parenting education programs based on the assumptions that fathers play an important role in both the social and emotional development of their children (Burbach et al., 2004).

The meta-analysis that was conducted on parenting training programs clearly demonstrated improved outcomes for fathers were just as significant as improved outcomes for mothers. Lundahl et al. (2008) revealed that including fathers led to

improved outcomes on parenting behaviours, but not on perceptions of parenting competencies. They also revealed that fathers made fewer changes to child rearing behaviours (e.g., warm and praise towards children, positive parenting behaviours) and perceptions about child rearing compared to mothers. Similarly, Fletcher et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis specifically on the Triple P-Positive Parenting Programs on the involvement of fathers. They revealed that 20% of participants were fathers, and had a greater rate of attrition than that of mother participants. The father's attrition rate had a high variability between 0% to 100%. Also, there was less of a positive impact on fathers compared to mothers that participated in the Triple P Parenting program. Therefore, it is strongly encouraged that fathers attend the parent education programs and not be excluded, and researchers should seek to understand how the programs can better meet the needs to the fathers.

Bagner and Eyberg (2003) evaluated several parent education programs on the basis of father involvement in the program and the extent of father's involvement in parent education programs intervention on the outcomes of the treatment. The quasi-experimental design study evaluated four types of parenting education programs specifically labelled as parenting and child intervention therapy, and the study involved father families, uninvolved father families, and absent father families. The results of the study indicated a high rate of involvement by the fathers, which was unanticipated and expected that the attendance rate of the involved fathers would relate to treatment outcome. Although the mothers from an involved father family reported that there was maintained treatment gains, mothers from an abandoned father family reported that after a few months the treatment effect ended. Therefore, the study suggests that parenting

education programs geared towards behavioural family interventions that include both the mother and father may result in more rapid positive effects of the program and those positive benefits may last longer (Bagner & Eyberg, 2003).

Theoretical Concepts in Parenting Education Programs

Several theoretical frameworks are used as a basis for a variety of parenting education programs that attempt to teach parents appropriate contingency management, modeling, and strategies to strengthen the attachment relationship between parent and child. Three theoretical perspectives will be discussed in accordance with parenting education programs: social learning theory, attachment theory, and human capital theory (see Figure 1).

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theories embody a group of theories that concern how human behaviour is modified through specific social experiences. More specifically, social learning theory (SLT) “provides a general rubric for conceptualizing family processes as well as other social interactions” (Miller & Prinz, 1990, p. 292). The social learning theory developed by Albert Bandura incorporates the concepts of modeling, or expectancies, and reinforcement, or incentives, and proposes that behaviour can be determined on the basis of these concepts. There are three types of expectancies: (a) expectancies about environmental cues related to how events are connected and what they lead to; (b) expectancies about the consequences of actions such as how an individual’s behaviour will influence his outcomes; and (c) expectancies about an individual’s competence to perform a behaviour is needed to influence outcomes, also known as efficacy expectation (Rosenstock, Strecher, & Becker, 1988). There is also a

reinforcement component of this theory that is defined as the particular outcome or objective (Rosenstock et al., 1988). For instance, Hawkins, Christiansens, Sargent, and Hill (1993) highlight that this theory can be applied to how men learn to be fathers. Fathers can observe positive parenting modeling of skills and attitudes in order to be effective caregivers, assuming that they see the modeling of behaviour as an important future behaviour. Hence, the support of partners and communities, and modeling of positive parenting and caregiver behaviour are important to foster and preserve. The social learning theory principles are used as a basis for behavioural family intervention programs, such as the Triple P Positive Parenting Program (Sanders, 2003).

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory emerges from the foundations of ethology and developmental psychology. The formulation of the theory was due to the joint work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (Bretherton, 1992). Bowlby contended, “attachment was a universal human phenomenon with a biological foundation that derives from natural selection” (as cited in Gray, 2007, p. 425). These attachment theorists proposed that human infants were biologically predisposed to emit signals (e.g., cry, smile) to which adults were predisposed to respond to these signals (Lamb et al., 1985). Historically, attachment theory was developed for the purpose of psychoanalysis theories on object relations to explain separation anxiety, mourning of adults and children, and defensive processes (Bretherton, 1985). Bowlby advocated that the period of infancy and childhood would be the time through which the first relationship was formed, usually with the mother, putting emphasis on the caregiver–child relationship that determined the future and well-being of the child (O’Gorman, 2012). Ainsworth approached the attachment theory systematically

by developing the strange-situation test to measure the attachment of the infant to the mother (Gray, 2007). Three systematic attachments are used to identify behaviours demonstrated by infants in this test. Secure attachment is used to classify infants who demonstrated that they were able to explore toys confidently in the room with their mother present, and become upset and explore toys less when mother was absent, regardless if a stranger was present or not. Avoidant attachment is used to classify infants who demonstrate behaviours of avoidance around the mother and almost acts coldly towards her. Lastly, anxious attachment is used to classify an infant who demonstrates continuous crying and frets despite the mothers attempt to comfort the infant (Gray, 2007).

O’Gorman (2012) argues that the types of attachments can be conceptualized as featuring stability and experiencing sensitive interactions with the caregiver, and relative order that appears to be enhanced or not with the caregiver–child system. For instance, infants securely attached experience a stable caregiver–child system with sensitive interactions and order. On the contrary, anxious attached infants do not have a stable caregiver-child system with no sensitivity and these systems are at risk for disorder. Theoretically, the importance of establishing a secure attachment with the infant has lifelong implications for strong later development (Cox et al., 1992).

Infants have the ability to establish attachment relationships with fathers and caregivers other than mothers; although the infant may have different types of experiences with fathers than mothers, the effects are independent of the effects of mother-child attachment (Cox et al., 1992; Grossmann et al., 2002; Lamb, 1977). It is theorized that the quality of the infant’s early attachment to the caregiver will strongly influence later development, including greater resilience to stress and strange situations,

and less depression and psychological distress (Dubowitz et al., 2001). Parent education programs in Ontario currently employ attachment principles to specific programs, including the program “Make the Connection” for parent training and resources delivered by Toronto Public Health and the “Baby Talk, Reach and Teach” kit containing resources for parents in early postpartum issued by Niagara Public Health (OMHP, 2010).

Human Capital Theory

The social capital theory is a theoretical approach that clearly recognizes the influence of parenting education programs and emphasizes that paternal involvement contributes to positive child outcomes. Coleman (1988) advocates that social capital theory is defined by its function. More specifically, it is not a single entity but a variety of different entities by means that “they all consist of some aspect of social structures and they facilitate certain actions of actors within the structure” (p. S98). Coleman (1988) highlights several forms of social capital including information channels; obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness of structures; and norms and effective sanctions. Coleman advocates that “there is one effect of social capital that is especially important: its effect on the creation of human capital in the next generation” (p. S109). Pleck (2007) revisits this theoretical perspective and the application of this theory to the role that parents play in the facilitation of optimal child development. Family social capital is in the form of parenting behaviour promoting the child’s cognitive-social development, school readiness, and educational aspirations in effect of the parents’ socialization of their children. Social capital outside the family or community refers to the linkages to the larger world that parents provide their children, in the form of schools and other settings,

sharing social networks with their children, or sharing knowledge of how to negotiate entry into the adult world (Pleck, 2007).

Summary of Literature Review and Present Study

The literature examined two specific areas relative to the study. The first section provided a general overview of father involvement and the importance of father involvement in early childhood—that is, cognitive, emotional, and well-being (Dubowitz et al., 2001; Grossman et al., 2002; Howard et al., 2006; Wilson & Prior, 2011). Three types of father involvement have been examined in the last century: the breadwinner, sex-role model, and the nurturing father (Lamb, 2000; LaRossa, 1988, 1991; Pleck, 1997, 2004; Stearns, 1990). The father involvement construct was developed in response to the changing history of father contribution, impact on child development, and a new egalitarian role of fathering (Hawkins et al., 2002; Lamb et al., 1985). Several factors within fatherhood affect father involvement including both internal and external factors, such as motivation, family structure, and employment (Castillo et al., 2011; Daly et al., 2009; Yoshida, 2012), as well as indirect and direct factors such as ethnicity, age, and education (Lamb et al., 1989; Oldershaw, 2002; Parker & Wang, 2013; Russell et al., 2011). The factors associated with father involvement can be modeled using the theoretical orientations of the social ecology model (Belsky, 1984; Bronfenbrenner, 1994) and the family systems model (Aldous et al., 1998; Minuchin, 1974).

Parenting education programs are community resources and support available to parents. These programs are rooted in positive parenting practices (Baumrind, 1978; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Rinaldi & Howe, 2012; Winsler et al., 2005) to promote optimal child development, and they are widely available across Canada—including

Nobody's Perfect, Triple P Positive Parenting, and Parent–Child Mother Goose programs (Lundahl et al., 2008; OMHP, 2010; Wyatt Kaminiski et al., 2008). Several theoretical concepts are used as models for parent education programs. These theoretical concepts include the social learning theory (Hawkins et al., 1993; Rosenstock et al., 1988), the attachment theory (Bretherton, 1992; Cox et al., 1992; Gray, 2007), and the human capital theory (Coleman, 1988; Pleck, 2007).

In the next chapter, Chapter 3, discusses details about the research design, selection of participants, research procedures, and methodological assumptions that investigate the trends of paternal involvement of fathers with children 6 years old and younger, and to compare the influence of parenting education programs on the paternal involvement dimensions (e.g., mother support, time and talking together) and conceptualization of a father.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This chapter examines the study's research methodology including the details of the research design, the selection of participants, research procedures, and the methodological assumptions and limitations. The chapter also examines the methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Introduction to Research Terminology

The methodology employed in this study was a mixed methods approach. Three distinct terms need to be defined before discussing this mixed methods research study and its implications: methodology, design, and methods. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) discuss that research *methodology* is a philosophical framework and fundamental assumption about research as a whole process. Pragmatism involves philosophical assumptions that are often applied to mix methods research. These assumptions focus on the consequences of the research and “on the primary importance of the question, rather than the methods, and multiple methods themselves” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 23). In this study, the research questions aimed to identify the father involvement trends, the influence of parent education programs on fathers, and the conceptualization of the role of the father.

The research *design* is the plan of action that links the philosophical assumptions to a specific method. There are several types of research designs including survey design, experimental design, and mixed methods design. This study employed a mixed methods triangulation design. In this study, the quantitative closed-ended responses and qualitative open-ended responses of the survey are compared and contrasted to reflect the father involvement trends and the influence of parenting programs on these fathers. Lastly,

research *methods* are more specific and include techniques of data collection, analysis and, in this case, the mixing of both quantitative and qualitative data. In this study, the methods modeled a transformation of the qualitative data into quantitative data.

Research Methodology

This study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods in combination and mixes the data. During the quantitative research, the researcher identified “a research problem based on the trends in the field or on the need to explain why something is occurring” (Creswell, 2012, p. 13). The data includes closed-ended information similar to what is found on an attitude, behaviour, or performance instrument (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The study used quantitative research to identify trends of father involvement (i.e., discipline and teaching responsibility, school encouragement, mother support, providing, time and talking together, praise and affection, developing talents and future concerns, reading and homework support, and attentiveness) in the data set with a self-reported instrument, the *Inventory of Father Involvement* (Hawkins et al., 2002). Qualitative research is best suited when the inquirer wants to address a research problem in which the variables are not known and need to be explored, and incorporates data derived from open-ended information that researchers gather through interviews, private documents, and audiovisual material (Creswell, 2012; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The study used the responses to open-ended inquiries to understand the trends in father involvement (i.e., time, engagement, support, and parenting education programs). The mixing of the data sets is unique to parenting research and helps to better understand the research problem than either set on its own. In this study, the influence of parent education programs on fathers was measured with pre-existing quantitative paternal

involvement parameters and qualitative perceptions of fathers and time, engagement, support, and parenting education factors.

Creswell (2012) suggests that the purpose of using mixed methods could be to provide an alternative perspective in an area of research. The purpose of applying mixed methodology to this study provided an alternative methodological approach to father involvement and parenting education research, in addition to better understanding the research questions and problem. Very few studies have used mixed methods research in father involvement and parent education program research. Latshaw (2011) sought to understand fathers as primary caregivers and used mixed methodology to explore the meaning of a “stay-at-home dad.” This was accomplished using a national large-scale survey that measured limited aspects father involvement, and was also accompanied by interviews to further understand fatherhood experiences to explore the phenomenon of full-time fatherhood. Waller and Swisher (2006) used mixed methods to evaluate fathers’ risk factors in fragile families and its associations with family relationship and father involvement. This was accomplished using survey and qualitative information from a previous study of Fragile Families and Child Well-being. Also, a mixed methodology was employed in Leijten, Overbeek, and Janssens’s (2012) study on the effectiveness of the parenting training programs for parents who are experiencing difficulties with their preadolescent children. Parents completed a questionnaire and they were also videotaped having a discussion with their child on an issue related to a recent argument. Pre- and post-test measurements were recorded for the experimental and control group.

Research Design

A mixed methodology triangulation design was an appropriate research design for this cross-sectional study of the influence of parenting education programs on fathers and the trends of positive paternal involvement. The triangulation mixed methods research design was used to analyze different (i.e., open- and closed-ended survey questions) but complementary data on the same topic to better understand the research problem of the study. The purpose of this design is to “directly compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings or to validate or expand quantitative results with qualitative data” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 62). In this study a variant of the triangulation design, a transformative data model, was adopted to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data sets separately. This was done using a single survey that included both closed- and open-ended questions. Specific to this model, after the initial analysis of each data set, one of the data sets is transformed into the other type (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). In this study, the qualitative data set was transformed into quantitative data. Therefore, the transformation allows the “data to be mixed during the analysis stage and facilitates the comparison, interrelation, and further analysis of the two data sets” (p. 65). The quantitative data on father involvement was compared and interrelated with transformed quantitative data on conceptualizing the role of the father. The transformation helped to clarify the results from the initial quantitative data set.

The general question underlying this empirical investigation was to examine the relation between positive paternal involvement trends and parenting education program participation.

Sampling Procedure

The data was collected from a sample of 52 fathers with a child or children between the ages of 0 and 6 in Canada. The participants of this study were chosen using convenience sampling. In convenience sampling, the researcher selects participants because they are willing and available to participate. The researcher cannot say that the sample is representative of the population. Yet, the sample can provide useful information for answering research questions (Creswell, 2012). The participant sample represented fathers from a variety of community sites in Ontario, including an Early Years Centre (OEYC) in Southern Ontario, Child Care Centre; provincial, including Father Involvement Initiative Ontario (FII-Ontario); and national, including Father Involvement Research Alliance (FIRA).

Measures

Each participant was asked to complete an electronic questionnaire either using a secured online survey program or a paper copy of the survey to be submitted to the site coordinator in a sealed envelope. All participants were surveyed with the same questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two parts but administered simultaneously (See Appendix A.) Part one of the survey consisted of 26 closed-ended items with questions adopted from a pre-existing father involvement instrument (Hawkins et al., 2002). Permission was obtained via email from Professor Alan Hawkins prior to the construction of the two-part survey questionnaire. Part two of the survey consisted of two open-ended questions that were centred on the phenomenon of attitudes and beliefs of parenting and the role of the father.

The short version of the *Inventory of Father Involvement* (IFI) is a 26-item, self-report instrument for parents that measures the multidimensional construct of father involvement (Hawkins et al., 2002). In this study, this tool was used to measure the crucial constructs of cognitive, affective, behavioural, and moral dimensions of direct and indirect father involvement (Hawkins et al., 2002). The IFI is comprised of nine dimensions that are important for father involvement because they include instrumental and traditional dimensions (e.g., providing, disciplining, and teaching responsibility), in addition to dimensions that reflect the tasks of an expected contemporary father (e.g., giving praise and affection; reading to children). The short version of the IFI contains three items within each dimension based on the following criteria: “the items retained a strong factor loadings, greater item variation in the sample, strong correlations with other items in the factor (to maintain high internal consistency reliability), and strong face validity” (Hawkins et al., 2002, p. 187). The data shown in Table 1 display the validity of each dimension of father involvement (Hawkins et al., 2002). Each item is to be rated based on experiences as a father in the last 12 months and how good of a job the father participant thought he did as a father. The response choices for each item are between 0 and 6, with 0 being “Very Poor” to 6 as “Excellent,” and “NA” if the question is not applicable.

In addition to the 26-item survey instrument in this study, demographic questions were also used to collect and identify the fathers’ ages, marital status, number of children, level of paternal education, and previous participation rates in parenting education programs.

Table 1

Nine Dimensions of Father Involvement and the Cronbach's Alpha of Each Dimension

Dimension	Cronbach's alpha
Discipline and teaching responsibility	.85
School Encouragement	.82
Mothers support	.87
Providing	.69
Time talking	.80
Praise and affection	.79
Developing talents and future concerns	.75
Reading and homework support	.83
Attentiveness	.69

Note: These validity measures are based on the Cronbach's alpha provided by Hawkins et al. (2002).

A modification to the survey questionnaire was cleared by the Research Ethics Board with Human Participants (File # 12-044 – HARWOOD) prior to data collection, to include more diversity in the marital status options of the demographic questions, and an additional question was included in part-two of the of the survey questionnaire to gain a greater perspective on father involvement.

Based on the review of the literature (see Allen & Daly, 2007; Devolin et al., 2012; Goodman, 2005; Lamb et al., 1985), and the importance of perception on the role of parenting, five unique questions were developed for this study. Four factors were used to formulate these questions: time, engagement, support, and parenting education programs.

In addition, three dimensions of positive parenting—monitoring and discipline, warmth and nurturance, and communication (see Baumrind, 1971, 1978; Maccoby & Martin, 1983)—were formulated to capture the positive parenting practices of fathers. These questions aimed to capture the beliefs and attitudes of fathers on personal perceptions of parenting and the role of the father. Participants had the opportunity to share moments as a dad, the support they received as a father, and the perceived value of parent education programs.

Procedure and Data Collection

Once permission was obtained by the Research Ethics Board with Human Participants (File # 12-044 – HARWOOD), a local school board (File # 10 – 09 – 12 – 01), and the coordinators of the community sites, a poster advertisement (Appendix B), and an electronic invitation (Appendix C) were supplied to the community sites to advertise and send to potential participants. For instance, community sites handed out and

displayed the poster for fathers accessing the community centre and sent an electronic invitation via e-mail to fathers who had supplied their e-mail addresses to the centre. The child care centre sent an electronic invitation to all fathers who had a child attending the child care centre, and provincial and national sites advertised an electronic invitation on internet and network sites. The Research Ethics Board with Human Participants cleared a modification to the procedure during the data collection in order to hand out paper copies of the survey questionnaire to local community sites. Furthermore, the following statement was included in the electronic questionnaire introduction:

Thank you for taking the time to address and complete the following questionnaire survey. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please note that all information provided is considered confidential. All responses will be considered as an average of the entire group of participants and you will not be identified individually in any way in the written report of the research. You may choose to withdraw from participation by simply logging off and the incomplete survey will be disregarded. If you choose to voluntarily participate in the study, please complete the survey to finish. Survey results will be disclosed for thesis completion and to the local community to continue improving community health and development. Thank you.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data processing and analysis was dependent on the number of participants in the study. I believe that the reason for the study having a reduced number of participants was due to the fact that participants were responsible for taking the initiative to complete the survey. The data processing and analysis employed a variation of the triangulation design

with an emphasis on a transformative model. There were two steps to the analysis of the data sets. First, the quantitative and qualitative data sets were analysed separately, but concurrently. Second, the qualitative data set was transformed into quantitative data to facilitate with the comparison and interrelation of both data sets.

Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative data statistical treatment was reflected in the descriptive analysis and limited inferential statistics, using the statistical software program SPSS (19.0). The descriptive statistics for the independent (i.e., age, ethnicity, education level, etc.) and dependent (i.e., nine dimensions of father involvement) variables were calculated for the frequency, minimum, maximum, mode, mean, and standard deviation. Recall that the nine dimensions of the IFI are (a) discipline and teaching responsibility, (b) school encouragement, (c) mother support, (d) providing, (e) time and talking together, (f) praise and affection, (g) developing talents and future, (h) reading and homework support, and (i) attentiveness.

Inferential statistics were used to go beyond the immediate data presented and to make inferences about these data. The dependent variable, the nine dimensions of father involvement, was collected as ordinal data. For the purpose of these analyses, the dimension scores were converted into a continuous data set of percentage scores. Normality of this data set was assumed because the sample size exceeded 30 participants ($N = 52$; Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). Two types of analyses were undertaken: (a) a comparison of means, and (b) a multiple regression. Firstly, a Pearson r correlation test was used to determine the statistically significant relationships that exist between the dependent variables and independent variables (see Appendix D). The Pearson r

correlation test revealed that a statistically significant relationship existed between (a) level of education with *developing talents and future concerns*, and (b) age of father with *time and talking together* and *praise and affection*. These variables were used to complete a One-Way ANOVA test. Since each independent variable (e.g., level of education and age of father) had more than two levels, a One-Way ANOVA test was used to compare the means of the father involvement dimensions between the levels of the demographic variables of interest. Secondly, a multiple regression test was used to verify the relationship between multiple predictor variables. A Pearson r correlation was performed to reveal statistically significant relationships between the dimensions of father involvement. Statistically significant relationships were used to identify the variables that predicted each dimension. These tests were conducted using a confidence interval of 95%. These tests were conducted to answer Research Question 1.

Qualitative Analysis

Four factors that emerged from the parenting and father involvement literature were used to construct the open-ended questions of the survey questionnaire (i.e., time, engagement, support, and parenting education programs). The three dimensions of positive parenting (i.e., communication, warmth and nurturance, and discipline and monitoring) were used to capture positive parenting practices of the participants.

The qualitative software program NVivo 9 was used to generate word frequencies for the positive parenting dimension inquiries. The top three words were recorded for each positive parenting dimension.

Table 2

Emerging Themes of Qualitative Data Set

Factor		Theme
Time		Management of time
		Physical realms of time
Engagement	Observational	“Firsts”
		Child development
	Interactional	Responsiveness
		Time together
Support		Support (i.e., comfortable environments, community support)
		No support (i.e., already supportive family)
Parenting education programs		Positive outcomes (i.e., for parent, for child)
		Extension of parenting knowledge
		Parenting is natural
		Unaware
		Availability

The paper and pencil method (see Goetz & LeCompte, 1981) was used as an inductive technique to scan for categories of the phenomenon of father involvement. The data were read once before codes were assigned to the responses to explore the “general sense of the data ... thinking about the organization of the data” (Creswell, 2012, p. 243). The researcher used a pencil to assign codes to the responses of each participant. These codes were assigned and labelled based on the researchers judgement of the data, and few were labelled with *invivo* codes (Creswell, 2012). Categories were used to “examine the codes that overlap and redundancy, and collapse these codes into broad themes” (Creswell, 2012, p. 243). The categories are organized into themes (see Table 2) on fathering based on these inductive analyses. The themes that emerged answered Research Question 2.

Transformation and Final Analysis

The qualitative data set was transformed into quantitative data. The presence of the themes in the responses of the participants was dichotomously scored. The quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS (19.0). Two analyses were conducted to answer Research Question 3. Firstly, a Pearson *r* correlation test was used to determine the statistically significant relationships that exist between the dependent variables and dichotomously scored theme variables (see Appendix E). The Pearson *r* correlation test revealed that a statistically significant relationship existed between (a) physical realm of time with *attentiveness*, (b) observe child development with *mother support*, (c) observe “firsts” with *mother support*, (d) need support with *attentiveness*, and (e) positive outcomes with *discipline and teaching responsibility* and *developing talents and future concerns*. These variables were used to complete an Independent Samples *T*-test. Since each dichotomously scored theme variable had two levels (i.e., present or not present), an

Independent Samples *T*-test was used to compare the means of the father involvement dimensions with the presence of the themes. Secondly, a Chi Square test was used to test for a significant relationship of sampling distribution between the categorical data sets of the demographic variables and the theme variables. These tests were conducted using a confidence interval of 95%.

As a component of the final analysis, the results of the analyses were organized into three metathemes: the contemporary father, father engagement, and supporting fathers. The purpose of this final analysis of using metathemes is to (a) capture the essence of each participant, and also (b) the connection to “other individuals and to the larger human groups through culture, literature, and history” (Ely, Vinz, Downing, & Anzul, 1997, p. 122). The metathemes are used to clarify and deepen the understanding of father involvement and parenting education programs. These metathemes are discussed more in detail in relation to the findings in chapters 4 and 5.

Methodological Assumptions and Limitations

The study sought to examine the trends in positive paternal involvement and influence of parent education programs on paternal involvement dimensions in Canada. The questionnaire and information obtained could be adapted for use in other provinces and applied to different regions in Canada. The results of this study may be of interest to other regions and parenting programs or father-specific programs and suggest opportunities for further research.

There are several methodological limitations in this study. The first inherent limitation is the cross-sectional design that limits responses to research questions with current father and children and less about transformative experience overtime. Second,

the paternal involvement diversity of the participants is limited to the sites of sampling (i.e., homogeneity of the sample), due to the degree of involvement of parents practised at these locations. Third, the responses to the closed- and open-ended questions that were used to measure the paternal involvement variable are all self-perceptions of the fathers in the study, and no additional subgroups were surveyed.

Summary of Methodology and Procedure

This chapter provided a description of the research methodology of this study. Several components of the methodology were discussed in more detail, including the research design, the selection of participants, research procedures, and the methodological assumptions and limitations. The methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation are based on the research questions:

1. What dimensions of father involvement challenge the contemporary father? And how do the dimensions of father involvement impact each other?
2. How do fathers conceptualize their role as parents?
3. How does the conceptualization of the role of the father impact father involvement?

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This study investigated the trends of paternal involvement of fathers with children under the age of 6, and compared the influence of parenting education programs on the paternal involvement dimensions and conceptualization of a father. A mixed methodology with a transformation model was employed to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data.

Chapter on Findings Overview

In the first section of this chapter, a brief profile of the fathers who participated in the study will be highlighted, as well as the demographic information collected from the questionnaire about the participants. Since the survey questionnaire was composed of both closed- and open-ended questions, the results of the survey will be highlighted in three separate sections. The second section of this chapter highlights the findings of the *Father Involvement Inventory* (IFI). The third section of this chapter identifies the themes that emanated from the analysis of the participants' responses to the open-ended questions. The fourth section highlights the interrelated relationship between the quantitative and qualitative data to provide a clear inventory and conceptualization of strong father involvement and the influence parenting education programs. Finally, the fifth section of this chapter provides an interpretation of the findings using the metathemes of time, engagement, support, and parenting education programs.

Participants' Demographic Profiles

The participants in the study were Canadian fathers ($N = 52$) with children between the ages of 0 and 6 (see Table 3). Approximately half (51%) of fathers who participated were between the age of 25 and 34. Approximately two-fifths (39%) of

fathers who participated were between the age of 35 and 44. The majority of dads who participated reported a relationship status of married (88%) and an ethnicity of Caucasian (90%). Approximately 85% of fathers reported a college or university level of education.

The fathers were invited to participate through a variety of parent and child centres, and websites across Canada, with the majority (71%) of participants reporting that they reside in Ontario. The remaining 29% of participants resided in British Columbia and Alberta.

Only one-third of fathers reported having participated in a parenting education program. The parenting education programs reported were:

- Breastfeeding classes
- Belly's to Babies
- Boy Smart Lecture by Barry McDonald
- Early Years—General play sessions, Parenting prenatal classes
- Father Involvement with Tim Paquette in Ottawa
- Infant Massage
- Many programs (e.g., sign language, Mother Goose, Infant lessons, etc.)
- My own—I teach
- Ontario Early Years Centre
- Parenting After Separation
- Parenting course
- Prenatal class
- Strong Start, BC

Table 3

Number of Children Between Ages 0 to 6

Age of children (<i>N</i> = 79)	One child		Two children	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
0	17	32.7	0	0
1	8	15.4	0	0
2	19	36.5	1	1.9
3	15	28.8	1	1.9
4	4	7.7	0	0
5	5	9.6	1	1.9
6	8	15.4	0	0

As highlighted in Table 3, a majority (77%) of the children whose fathers participated were pre-school aged, between 0 and 3 years old. The Canadian fathers in the study represented a homogenized sample of fathers in Canada with children under age 6.

Quantitative Findings

The first section of the survey questionnaire used the IFI (Hawkins et al., 2002) that measures the nine dimensions of father involvement, and three dimensions of positive parenting (see Baumrind, 1971, 1978). The participants were asked to rate each experience as a father in the last 12 months and how good of a job they did as a father on a scale of 0 to 6 (“Poor” to “Excellent,” respectively). The IFI contains 26-items that represent multidimensional constructs of father involvement. The nine dimensions of positive paternal involvement are discipline and teaching responsibility; school encouragement; mother support; providing; time and talking together; praise and affection; developing talents and future; reading and homework support; and attentiveness (Hawkins et al., 2002). The participants’ responses were converted into continuous scaled values of percentages. The Canadian fathers perceived themselves to be highly involved fathers, which was representative of the high scores the fathers used to rate themselves within the nine dimensions of father involvement (see Table 4).

Among the nine dimensions of father involvement, *providing* (98.9%, S.D. = 3.274) and *praise and affection* (95.08%, S.D. = 7.351) were the highest recognized dimensions of father involvement by the Canadian fathers. This means that fathers perceived themselves to be well involved in telling their child they love them, praising their child for something they have done well, and providing the child with basic needs and financial support.

Table 4

Minimum, Maximum, Mode, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Father Involvement

Dimensions Reported by Fathers

Dimension	<i>N</i>	Min. (%)	Max. (%)	Mode (%)	<i>M</i> (%)	<i>SD</i>
Discipline and teaching responsibility	50	50	100	100	84.58	13.38
School encouragement	30	33	100	100	88.00	15.13
Mother support	50	39	100	100	87.82	14.793
Providing	52	83	100	100	98.90	3.274
Time and talking together	49	67	100	100	87.10	13.05
Praise and affection	51	56	100	100	95.08	7.351
Developing talents and future	50	50	100	100	88.28	13.802
Reading and homework support	51	33	100	100	86.55	14.659
Attentiveness	52	56	100	100	89.81	11.267

Nonetheless all scores were relatively high, yet *discipline and teaching responsibility* (84.58 %, S.D. = 13.38) and *reading and homework support* (86.55%, S.D. = 14.659) were the lowest recognized dimensions of father involvement among the scores. This means that in comparison to the other seven dimensions, fathers perceived themselves to be moderately involved in encouraging children to read, encouraging children to do chores, and disciplining children. Also illustrated in Table 4, the minimum scores of *school encouragement*, *reading and homework support*, and *mother support* were the lowest compared to the other dimensions, which suggests that, although the sample is quite homogenous, there are fathers who perceive themselves to be less involved in those dimensions of father involvement. These lower scores of dimensions related to school involvement (e.g., reading and homework support, school encouragement) could be because there were fathers with fewer children of school age, or over the age of 3 years old (23%).

The three dimensions of positive parenting are discipline and monitoring, communication, and nurture and warmth. The Canadian fathers recognized that they were highly involved fathers within the dimensions of positive parenting (see Table 5). The means of all three positive parenting dimensions are relatively high and close to each other (i.e., $\pm 1\%$). The dimension of *nurture and warmth* had the lowest total mean (89.55%) and the dimension of *communication* had the highest mean (90.67%). However, the range and means of these dimensions suggest that the fathers are homogenous in their positive parenting practices.

Table 5

Minimum, Maximum, Mode, Mean, and Standard Deviation of Positive Parenting

Dimensions Reported by Fathers

Dimension	Min.	Max.	Mode	<i>M (%)</i>	<i>SD</i>
Discipline and monitoring	71	100	100	89.88	7.791
Communication	70	100	100	90.67	9.726
Nurture and warmth	63	100	100	89.55	10.201

Comparing Means of Dimensions for Demographic Variables

A Pearson r correlation test was computed to assess the relationship between the dimensions of father involvement and the demographic variables (i.e., age, relationship status, age of children, number of children, location of residence, education level, and previous participation in a parent education program; see Appendix D).

There was a correlation between age of the father and *time and talking together* ($r = -.308, p = .031$), and *praise and affection* ($r = -.329, p = .018$); and between the level of education and *developing talents and future concern* ($r = .355, p = .011$). A One-Way ANOVA test was used to compare the means of father involvement for the demographic variables of interest (i.e., age of father and education level of father).

Age of father. The four levels of the age of father (i.e., ages 19 to 24; 25 to 34; 35 to 44; and 45 to 54) were used to compare father involvement in *time and talking together* and *praise and affection*. A One-Way ANOVA test was used to compare father involvement among the four age groups of the fathers. The test revealed that there was statistical significance in the father involvement of *praise and affection* ($F(3, 47) = 3.371, p = .026$). This means those fathers over 35 years old perceived themselves less involved in spending time talking and time together with their child. Moreover, the test revealed that there was no statistical significance in the father involvement dimension of *time and talking together*.

Education level. The three levels of education (i.e., less than grade 8, high school diploma, and college diploma or university degree) were used to compare father involvement in *developing talents and future concerns*. A One-Way ANOVA test was used to compare father involvement among the three education levels. The test revealed

that there was statistical significance in the father involvement dimension of *developing talents and future concerns* between the different levels of education ($F(2, 47) = 3.398, p = .042$). Fathers who had Grade 8 level education recognized that they were less involved in planning for their child's future and encouraging them to develop their talents than fathers with postsecondary education.

Predictors of the Father Involvement Dimensions

Moderate to low correlations coefficients (r) were calculated using the Pearson r correlations test between the nine dimensions of paternal involvement. Table 6 displays the correlations that were statistically significant. It is important to note that the father involvement dimension of *providing* was not correlated with any of the other dimensions. A multiple regression was used to highlight the predictability of the dimensions, and the summary of these analyses is presented in Table 7.

Discipline and teaching responsibility. The dimensions of *school encouragement, mother support, time and talking together, praise and affection*, and *developing talents and future concerns* predicted approximately 27%, $F(5, 22) = 3.007, p = .032$, of the variance in the *discipline and teaching responsibility* scores of the participants. Specifically, the *praise and affection* dimension score predicted the dimension of *discipline and teaching responsibility* score, $\beta = .692, t(22) = 2.416, p = .024$. Specifically, this suggests that the recognized father involvement in praise and affection predicts involvement in disciplining and teaching.

Table 6

Pearson r Correlation Coefficients Between the Nine Father Involvement Dimensions

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B	.477**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
C	.389**	.516**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D	.114	.065	-.019	-	-	-	-	-	-
E	.291*	.686**	.565**	.046	-	-	-	-	-
F	.443**	.407*	.278	.079	.506**	-	-	-	-
G	.322*	.309	.408**	.047	.431**	.236	-	-	-
H	.139	.566**	.329*	.065	.536**	.401**	.305*	-	-
I	.186	.671**	.285*	.204	.541**	.389**	.144	.361**	-

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: The following letters correspond to each dimension of the *Inventory of Father Involvement*: (a) *Discipline and Teaching Responsibility*, (b) *School Encouragement*, (c) *Mother Support*, (d) *Providing*, (e) *Time and Talking Together*, (f) *Praise and Affection*, (g) *Developing Talents and Future*, (h) *Reading and Homework Support*, and (i) *Attentiveness*. The dash (-) represents repeated correlation.

Table 7

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis of Father Involvement Dimensions

Outcome variable	Predictor variable	R ² (adjusted)	p-value
Discipline and teaching responsibility	School encouragement	.271	.032*
	Mother support		
	Time and talking together		
	Praise and affection		
	Developing talents and future concerns		
School encouragement	Discipline and teaching responsibility	.611	.000*
	Mother support		
	Time and talking together		
	Praise and affection		
	Reading and homework support		
Mother support	Attentiveness	.196	.097
	Discipline and teaching responsibility		
	School encouragement		
	Time and talking together		
	Developing talents and future concerns		
Time and talking together	Reading and homework support	.578	.001*
	Attentiveness		
	Discipline and teaching responsibility		
	School encouragement		
	Mother support		
Praise and affection	Developing talents and future concerns	.318	.015*
	Discipline and teaching responsibility		
	School encouragement		
	Mother support		
	Time and talking together		
	Reading and homework support		

Table 7 (cont'd)

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis of Father Involvement Dimensions

Outcome variable	Predictor variable	R ² (adjusted)	p-value
Developing talents and future concerns	Discipline and teaching responsibility	.339	.013*
	School encouragement		
	Mother support		
	Time and talking together		
	Reading and homework support		
Reading and homework support	School encouragement	.177	.116
	Mother support		
	Time and talking together		
	Praise and affection		
	Developing talents and future concerns		
	Attentiveness		
Attentiveness	School encouragement	.367	.009*
	Mother support		
	Time and talking together		
	Praise and affection		
	Reading and homework support		

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

School encouragement. The dimensions of *discipline and teaching responsibility, mother support, time and talking together, praise and affection, reading and homework support, and attentiveness* predicated approximately 61%, $F(7, 20) = 7.054, p = .000$, of the variance in the *school encouragement* scores of the participants. Specifically, the *discipline and teaching responsibility* dimension score predicts the dimension of *school encouragement* score, $\beta = .382, t(20) = 2.112, p = .047$. This means that the recognition of involvement in disciplining and teaching predicts recognition of involvement in encouraging children in school.

Time and talking together. The dimensions of *discipline and teaching responsibility, school encouragement, mother support, praise and affection, developing talents and future concerns, reading and homework support, and attentiveness* predicated approximately 58%, $F(7, 20) = 6.280, p = .001$, of the variance in the *time and talking together* scores of the participants. Specifically, the *developing talents and future concerns* dimension score predicted the dimension of *time and talking together* score, $\beta = .393, t(20) = 2.443, p = .024$. This suggests that the recognition of involvement in encouraging children to develop talents and planning for future predicts the recognition of involvement in time spent together and talking.

Praise and affection. The dimensions of *discipline and teaching responsibility, school encouragement, mother support, time and talking together, reading and homework support, and attentiveness* predicted approximately 31%, $F(5, 23) = 3.609, p = .015$, of the variance in the *praise and affection* scores of the participants. Specifically, the *discipline and teaching responsibility* dimension score predicted the dimension of *praise and affection* score, $\beta = .310, t(23) = 2.634, p = .015$. Ideally, this means that the

recognition of involvement in disciplining and teaching predicts the recognition of involvement in praise and affection for child.

Developing talents and future concerns. The dimensions of *discipline and teaching responsibility, school encouragement, mother support, time and talking together*, and *reading and homework support* predicated approximately 34%, $F(5, 22) = 3.770, p = .013$, of the variance in the *developing talents and future concerns* scores of the participants. Specifically, the *time and talking together* dimension score predicted the dimension of *developing talents and future concerns* score, $\beta = .576, t(22) = 2.756, p = .012$. This suggests that the fathers' recognition of involvement in the time spent together and talking with child predicts the recognition of involvement in planning child's future and developing talents.

Attentiveness. The dimensions of *school encouragement, mother support, time and talking together, praise and affection*, and *reading and homework support* predicated approximately 37%, $F(5, 22) = 4.129, p = .009$, of the variance in the *attentiveness* scores of the participants. Although there were not specific dimensions that predicted the outcome scores of this dimension, the combination of the predictor variables was still statistically significant.

The regression analysis reveals that some dimensions of father involvement (i.e., *discipline and teaching responsibility, praise and affection, school encouragement, attentiveness, time and talking together*, and *developing talents and future concerns*) are strong predictors of each other. There is a bidirectional predictor relationship that exists between the dimensions of *discipline and teaching responsibility* and *praise and affection*. Yet, the beta coefficient for the dimension of *praise and affection* as a predictor

for *disciplining and teaching responsibility* is higher than the vice versa ($\beta = .692$ vs. $\beta = .310$). Possibly, fathers who recognize the increased time spent praising and displaying affection to child may provide the fathers with more opportunity to engage in discipline and teaching with child. It also suggests that praising may be a component of teaching that is valued by the father. In addition, there is a shared bidirectional relationship between the dimensions of *time and talking together* and *developing talents and future concerns*. Yet, again, the beta coefficient for the dimensions of *time and talking together* as a predictor for *developing future talents and future concerns* is higher than the vice versa ($\beta = .576$ vs. $\beta = .393$). This suggests that fathers who spend more time talking and together with their child learn more about their child's talents and future plans.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings were a result of theme-based analysis and coding that was conducted on the data collected from the second part of the survey questionnaire. These qualitative findings are presented in two sections: (a) qualitative responses of examples of positive parenting, and (b) qualitative responses of four factors of fathering. Time (Allen & Daly, 2007; Cox et al., 1992; Yeung et al., 2001), engagement (Guzzo, 2011; Lamb et al., 1985), support (Devolin et al., 2012; Goodman, 2005; Krishnakumar & Black, 2003), and parenting education programs (Devolin et al., 2012; Fletcher et al., 2011; OMHP, 2010) are factors drawn from the parenting literature and linked to father involvement. The qualitative responses were used to help validate and supplement the quantitative findings.

Positive Parenting Dimensions and Fathering

There are three dimensions of positive parenting, previously mentioned in the quantitative section, that include: discipline and monitoring, communication, and

nurturing and warmth with children. Eight overarching themes emerged from the analysis relating to discipline and monitoring, communicating, and nurturing.

Discipline and monitoring the child. Consistently, the fathers used three specific words or their derivatives to describe the practice of discipline and monitoring of their child: time, play, and discipline.

Time. The fathers used the word time in the following ways:

- “3 second warning, followed by a timeout” (Transcript Code Lines 356);
“Time out corner—watch what they eat, watch and play with” (Transcript Code Line 385); and
- “Timeouts when he does not listen or follow rules (hits, throws things). Time out consists of him sitting in corner or in bedroom with no TV or interaction when time out is over he apologizes and then we play again” (Transcript Code Lines 391-393).

Therefore, time was used to describe the action implemented, a “time out,” when the child misbehaved.

Play. The fathers used the word play, and similar words, to describe discipline and monitoring in the following ways:

- “Removal of favourite toy for non-compliance” (Transcript Code Line 375);
and
- “Can't play with next toy/other activity until other toys are put away; manners please/thank you - share and no crying if someone has a toy you want” (Transcript Code Lines 358-359).

Therefore, fathers used play to describe the restriction of an activity or play when the child misbehaved.

Discipline. The fathers used the word discipline, and similar words, in the following ways to describe discipline and monitoring:

- “Correct inappropriate behaviour immediately, usually with stern voice” (Transcript Code Line 362); and
- “Near-constant interaction with child outside of school, discipline by withholding reward (i.e., no dessert if don't eat dinner)” (Transcript Code Lines 370-371).

Therefore, fathers used discipline, and similar words, to describe the action to correct misbehave and ensure that proper behaviour was portrayed. The practice of discipline and monitoring were consistent among the fathers in the study. Approximately one-third of fathers used “time outs” as a practice of discipline and monitoring. Similarly, enforcing rules and consequential reactions for bad behaviour included the removal or restriction of play or toys. Very little discussion of monitoring child (i.e., knowing where and what your child is doing) was generated. Possibly, there is less time to engage in monitoring and disciplining practices.

Communicating with child. Consistently, the fathers reported items under three themes to describe the practice of communication with their child: talking, play, and reading.

Talking. The fathers used the word talking, or its derivative, in the following ways:

- “Always talk during car rides” (Transcript Code Line 401);

- “Always talking to him no matter what we are doing and never ignore him, trying to get him to expand his vocabulary, tell him I love him everyday, try to read to him but he isn't to interested” (Transcript Code Lines 402-403); and
- “Round table talks at dinner table, talks at bed time, instructions before beginning activities, we are talking all the time” (Transcript Code Lines 427-428).

Therefore, fathers used talking to describe the verbal, bidirectional interaction between themselves and their child.

Play. The fathers used the word play, or its derivative, in the following ways:

- “Playing games with them, going for a walk” (Transcript Code Line 418); and
- “Playing games, puzzles, eating meal with them” (Transcript Code Lines 419).

Therefore, fathers used play to describe the physical interaction between father and child.

Reading. The fathers used the word reading, or its derivative, in the following ways:

- “Reading to them everyday, and correcting how they talk” (Transcript Code Line 426); and
- “Read. Watch show about reading. Roll around and make funny noises” (Transcript Code Line 423).

Therefore, fathers used reading to describe time together that involved them reading to the child or showing the child life tasks. The way that fathers communicate with their children was described in a multisensory way (i.e., physical and verbal), and exercised at all times of the day (e.g., before bed, car rides, dinner time).

Nurturing and warmth with child. Two words were most frequently used to describe the ways in which fathers reported their expression of nurturing and warmth with child: hugs and play.

Hugs. The fathers used the word hugs (i.e., cuddling, kissing, and snuggling) in the following ways:

- “Constant hugs and snuggles, encouragement, positive reinforcement, encouragement to try new things” (Transcript Code Lines 451-452);
- “Cuddle time in the morning, cuddle before bed, let them know I love them” (Transcript Code Line 455); and
- “Cuddle relax with them read them a bed time story play with them put them to sleep tell them I love u every day” (Transcript Code Lines 453-454).

Therefore, fathers used this term to describe the action of giving an abundance of hugs, kisses, and snuggle with their child, which are all positive, age-appropriate ways to nurture your child.

Play. The fathers used the word play (i.e., games, toys, and sports) in the following ways:

- “Alone time playing with toys, feeding, napping together” (Transcript Code Line 449);
- “Drawing on back game, board games, Mario games, reading together, hugs and kisses everyday. I love you’s everyday” (Transcript Code Lines 458-459); and

- “Play with his trucks and cars with him, take him skating, watch whatever movie he wants to watch with him, always encouraging him when he does something well or being good” (Transcript Code Lines 482-483).

Fathers used this term to describe the activities of spending time together playing games and toys together. These interactions suggest that this sample of Canadian fathers often engage in physical interactions and play with their child as a form of nurturing and display of affection.

Conceptualizing the Contemporary Father

Four factors were extracted out of father involvement and parenting literature and used to investigate the conceptualization of the contemporary father in this study. The four factors that were analyzed include time (Allen & Daly, 2007; Cox et al., 1992; Yeung et al., 2001), engagement (Guzzo, 2011; Lamb et al., 1985), support (Devolin et al., 2012; Goodman, 2005; Krishnakumar & Black, 2003), and parenting education programs (Devolin et al., 2012; Fletcher et al., 2011; OMHP, 2010; Fletcher et al., 2011). This section is divided into four sections that correspond to the four factors that were analyzed.

Time and fathering. Participants were asked to reflect on the concept of time and their role as a father. The researcher identified two emerging themes from these data: the concepts of time as physical realms, and time management.

Time as physical realms. The participants discussed time as two separate, physical realms: at “work” and at “home.” Approximately two-thirds of fathers discussed the separation of work and fathering. Fathers described that work outside of the home

often restricted the amount of time they spent with their children. One father shared the challenge of time as a working dad:

I work shift work where I work a week on and a week off and when I work I alternate between night and day shifts each week. I also work longer days (14 hours). So when I work I am working. When I am working my week of days I won't see my boy and when I am on nights I might see him for an hour or two before I go work. It sucks but my work provides great financial stability in our household. (Transcript Code Lines 35-39)

Although less physical time was spent with the children as reported by the fathers, financial security and stability was the trade-off of working more hours.

Fathers also perceived that time physically away from work as time for fathering. When fathers had time off from work, they used time to parent and act as a father to their child. One father highlighted that he worked “50+ hours/week during school year, but have four months off in summer, wherein I am the primary caregiver” (Transcript Code Lines 32-33). Similarly, fathers who worked less identified that they had more time to share with their child: “I only work 2 days a week. I am home 5 days so I have lots of time to spend together” (Transcript Code Line 23).

Some fathers (15%) who discussed time in physical realms, discuss that time as a father is conceptualized as a 24 hour, 7 days a week role for them. One father discusses the benefits of being a stay-at-home dad: “I want to spend as much time with my children as possible. I am a stay-at-home father, so I get so spend most of my time with my kids” (Transcript Code Lines 30-31). Some fathers did not have a choice but to be a father to their child all the time as a single parent, dismissing time as a factor. Moreover, there

were fathers who did work but choose to use more time as a father and with their family:

“I have built my career around family. It affects my financial abundance poorly but I have time for my kids” (Transcript Code Lines 20-21).

Therefore, the responses of the fathers illustrate a spectrum of concepts in terms of how time affects their role as a father. Fathers who spend more time at/on work have very little time with the children and family, but reap financial stability; fathers who spend fewer hours at/on work have more time with the children, but potentially reap less financial stability.

Time management. The participants also discussed their role as a father as a responsibility and management of time. Fathers stated that their main priority was to be a father, and to ensure they took an active role in their child’s life. To do so, they planned time off work to fulfill these duties. Consistently, fathers reported that their role as a parent and father was important and a priority:

- “I spend most of the time with our child. I took off 8 months to raise our child. He still loves his mom that extra bit like all boys do though” (Transcript Code Lines 24-25).
- “I am [the] primary caregiver of my child. My role as a father is the most important and extensive role I play, to the extent that I miss work to remain extremely active in my son's life” (Transcript Code Lines 17-18).
- “[I] need to take some time off from work to spend more time with my daughter, play with her, she is most important” (Transcript Code Lines 59-60).

Fathers who did not work outside of the home, but worked from home also identified the importance of establishing limits to work and make time to father:

I have a job that is stressful and have a BlackBerry, it's up to me to establish the limits and imposition on my time with them. I make a point of explaining that sometimes I need to do work when at home, but I try hard not to mix both, when I am with them, I need to be fully committed and invest in what we are doing.

(Transcript Code Lines 51-54)

Fathers ensured that they were completely available (i.e., physically, emotionally, psychologically) to ensure that nothing takes their attention away from their children (e.g., emails, texting). Furthermore, while there were fathers who planned time for work and time to father, 10% of fathers who discussed management of their time explained that the time before and after work was spent with their children: "I try to spend as much time as possible with her when not at work" (Transcript Code Line 29).

Managing time, in terms of work and father time was deemed to be a very challenging task for the fathers. One father highlighted that the lack of time available in a day was most challenging:

By far the most difficult part of parenting is fitting in all the things they need in such a small amount of time. By the time they are in JK I see them for a total of 4 hours a day max thru the week. Working full time and coming home and doing all the things they want...and all the things they need (which aren't always the same) is a struggle (Transcript Code Lines 4-7).

Fathers who reported working full time repeatedly discussed the difficulties of managing time as a father: "Very much so as I'm a full-time professional and work week daily until 16:30 hrs. Child is in bed usually by 19:00 hrs. Try to spend some time with her before going to work in the morning, but not always possible" (Transcript Code Lines 84-86).

Therefore, the responses of the fathers illustrated a spectrum of concepts in terms of how time is managed and balanced between work and fathering time. Fathers who worked full-time hours indicated that they needed to plan time away from work to spend time with their child, or improvise by using the time before and after work to spend with their child. Overall, time was considered to be a significant challenge when it comes to their role as a father.

Engaging fathers. Next, the participants were asked to describe one of their favourite moments as a father, in addition to a favourite moment with their own father. The researcher identified four emerging themes from this data: spending time with each other, responsiveness of the child, child development, and “first” moments. The researcher classified these emerging themes as: (a) observational engagement, and (b) interactional engagement.

Observational engagements. The researcher defines favoured observational engagements as moments that fathers observed and not necessarily acted as an active agent in these moments. The researcher classified the themes of child development and the child’s “firsts” moments (e.g., first word, crawling, walking, riding a bike) as observational engagements. This was a theme specific to the moments favoured as a father. Four fathers highlighted that “each day” was their favourite moment as a father. More specifically, one-third of fathers shared that observing their child’s “first” moments was one of their beloved moments of being a father. One father stated that “Every day is filled with great moments—you just need to be truly ‘present’ to capture them” (Transcript Code Lines 98-99).

Proud moments reported by the included bike riding, skating without help, walking unassisted, and learning to say “daddy.” Approximately 20% of fathers also highlighted the birth of their child as their favourite moment. Aligned with observational engagement, some fathers also discussed the development of their child and the pleasure attached to watching their child learn new things. One father shared that he has “Many proud moments. Listening to my girls read on their own, watching them perform in plays and drama, hearing about them working out their problems with friends in a civilized way” (Transcript Code Lines 104-105). Similarly, another father noted that:

Keeping my promises: something as simple as bringing them colouring pages at night that I promised to get printed that day. I also like to see them learn something new and have that moment of revelation that they discovered something new! (the Ah-ha moment!) (Transcript Code Lines 108-110).

Watching, observing, and listening were used to describe fathers observed favourite moments.

Interactional engagements. The researcher defines interactional engagements as moments that fathers interacted with their children and acting as an active agent in these moments. This theme was also present in moments that were favoured with their own fathers. The researcher classified the themes of spending time together (i.e., engaging in activities together, playing together) and responsiveness of child as interactional engagements. In parenting literature, responsiveness describes the child’s change in behaviour in response to the parent’s actions, or the parent’s change in behaviour in response to their child’s actions (Forman & Kochanska, 2001; Verhoeve, Junger, van Aken, Deković, & van Aken, 2010). The time that fathers spent with their children was a

common theme that fathers described with their own children, and fathers described with their own father.

The fathers described the time they spent with their child as their favourite moment. For example:

- “On a daily basis, reading her favourite storybook and singing ‘Sunshine’ while laying with her, waiting for her to fall asleep” (Transcript Code Lines 120-121).
- “Laughing and playing are always fun. Just hanging out is nice too” (Transcript Code Lines 128-129).

Fathers described time they spent with their own fathers as well. Approximately 63% of participants described the time spent together as physical and activity-based engagements. They described activities like camping, attending sports events, playing sports, and other games together. Six of the participants shared that they spent special one-on-one time that was unique to their relationship: “Having breakfast at a greasy-spoon diner. We used to have a sailboat, and we spent some nice times on that too. We have done a couple (road) trips, which have been special as well” (Transcript Code Lines 172-173).

Only 10% of participants described their favourite moment with their father in a responsive nature (i.e., saying they were proud, teaching them something new).

Seventeen percent of participants shared more frequently responsive moments with their own children. One father described the positive response he received from his child as a reaction to his engagement: “Every time you teach him something and you can see his eyes light up because he understands. I love knowing that you are able to shape his future

and I am just trying to do the best I can” (Transcript Code Lines 117-119). Similarly, another father shared that his favourite moment came from “encouraging her to try new things (from food to activities) and her sense of positive accomplishment when she likes the new activity” (Transcript Code Lines 113-114). Overall, the moments of engagement that the fathers described can be classified into observational and interactional engagements.

Supporting fathers. The participants were asked to reflect on supports needed in their role as a father. The researcher identified three emerging themes from this data: community supports, creating a comfortable environment for fathers, and no support.

Creating a comfortable environment for fathers. Approximately half of the fathers indicated that they needed support in their role as a father. Out of half of the participants, three-quarters of the fathers indicated that they need a comfortable environment supporting and meeting the needs of fathers. One father described:

Even though I did go to the early years centre I did not go back. Not because I did not like the staff or the facilities. It is just filled with moms and their kids. Moms talk about mom things. ... Breast-feeding, pushing the baby out and other more personal private experiences they can share. As a dad you don't fit in. It will be a while until my son plays sports where I can chat with the dads or moms our kids playing and having fun. (Transcript Code Lines 222-226)

There was an emphasis on environments (i.e., groups, programs) that are specifically created for fathers and to engage fathers in early childhood. This included suggestions where “other fathers can meet and discuss challenges and excitement” (Transcript Code Line 216), and more specifically using these groups in terms of “peer support”

(Transcript Code Line 267). One father discussed the challenges of being a father and recognized primary caregiver:

Support in general. Belief that I can -and should- plays a near-equal part in our daughter's life and upbringing. Also, I hear lots of stories of father's getting separated from their children when relationships break-down, and this is often when the father is a good and stable force in the child's life. This is a serious problem, much of which has to do with arrangements in our legal system that are actually unjust. (Transcript Code Lines 271-275)

Moreover, fathers suggested using online venues to connect with other fathers with infants and preschool children to discuss challenges and share stories. The fathers highlighted that this would create a more flexible and available environment, including “possible email groups, or Facebook groups” (Transcript Code Lines 228-229).

Community supports. Out of half of the participants who said they needed support as a father, 25% discussed a need for community support. Support as a father at work is important and valuable, as one father shared:

Not getting badgered at work for taking time to see my children during a workday. Example; my little ones go to early years and library class during the week, I have not been able to see them at either because they are during work. (Transcript Code Lines 262-264)

The fathers perceived that time and availability as a father is important in early childhood. A workplace that supports parents and father involvement (e.g., parent-friendly policies, parental leave) is considered a needed and valuable support.

No support is needed. Approximately half of participants also indicated that they did not need support. Fathers suggested that educational support is only needed for men who are a priority population (i.e., young father, single father):

As for educational support I don't think that I would use it. Maybe if I was a teenager with a child that would be beneficial, but I believe that if you fathered a child and no matter what, you are a man and should provide everything that child needs (emotionally, financially, etc.). (Transcript Code Lines 244-246)

Similarly, one-fifth of fathers shared that their marriage, wife, and family were their support system: “I think being married I have great support from my wife in understanding how my daughters may feel or look at certain issues” (Transcript Code Lines 247-248).

Overall, while there were fathers who indicated that they did not need support, there were a great number of fathers who were not receiving the support they indicated was needed.

Father involvement in parenting education programs. The participants were asked to reflect on the reasons for participating, or not participating, in a parenting education program. In combination, the researcher identified five emerging themes from the responses: Positive outcomes, extending knowledge, unaware, parenting is natural, availability. Approximately 35% of the fathers had previously participated in a parenting education program. Positive outcomes and enhancing their parenting knowledge were two reasons they stated for their participation.

Positive outcomes. The main reason the majority of fathers (75%) indicated they attended a parenting education program was for the understood positive outcomes directly linked to parent and child development. One father shared:

I was quickly adopting behaviours that I hated and that I promised I would never have with my kids (yelling and anger) I have the luxury of being educated and having a lifestyle that provides opportunity for seeking support...I had no excuses not to be a better dad! (Transcript Code Lines 315-317)

One father discussed the responsibility he had as a father in raising his children: “I felt the class was necessary to properly raise my children and make sure they were safe” (Transcript Code Line 307), but “unfortunately found it very dry and not interactive at all, so hard to pay attention” (Transcript Code Lines 307-308).

Expansion of knowledge. Approximately 25% of fathers who attended a parenting education program articulated that the programs were opportunities to gain more knowledge about parenting: “I wanted to know what I was getting into and what I needed to do as a parent” (Transcript Code Line 313). Another father explained that “Parenting is a tough job—long hours and low pay—so anything I can do to improve is needed... my kids are my life and why wouldn't you want to learn more skills, techniques, and tips” (Transcript Code Lines 327-328). There were also added benefits in attending as a new father, as one father shares:

I went cause I was a first time father didn't know what to expect plus after the program if you complete you get a bunch of free stuff for your new born baby e.g. Stroller car seat paid birth certificate and lots of other house hold safety items plus I wanted to learn what to do and what no to do. (Transcript Code Lines 318-320)

Unaware of existence. Two-thirds of fathers who did not attend a parenting education program provided several reasons for lack of attendance. More than half (60%) of the fathers noted that they were unaware that these programs existed. One father

commented: “The only formal program I’ve attended was pre-natal classes during the pregnancy. I’m unaware of any other parenting education classes to be honest”

(Transcript Code Lines 329-330). Another father shared: “I didn't even think to take a parenting education program...in retrospect I wish I had. Learning by making mistakes isn't always a great way to do things” (Transcript Code Lines 304-305).

Not available. One-fifth of fathers discussed that availability was a factor in deciding to attend a program. Working shifts altered schedule availability to attend the programs. Also, some programs are available for parents that meet particular qualifications, as one father explained:

I looked into local, applicable parenting education programs and, having had a fairly progressive upbringing, decided that I had already attained the level of parenting skill/ability that the program was geared towards. (Transcript Code Lines 309-311)

Program promotion and encouraging fathers to participate in these programs was a shortcoming of programs that these fathers noticed. One father shared an experience that had deterred him from seeking further programming:

[I] wanted to share the experience with wife and child. Unfortunately I was told fathers were not welcome at one session because the instructor felt some breastfeeding women might feel uncomfortable!!! (My wife breastfed). [I] have not attended anything since. (Transcript Code Lines 335-337)

Parenting is natural. Finally, approximately 13% of fathers discussed the innate nature of parenting. As one father describes: “[I] did not attend. Just had no interest I can

look things up on the internet and have a natural ability to parent” (Transcript Code Lines 290-291).

Transformation and Complementary Findings

The qualitative and quantitative data were merged together using the transformation model of the triangulation design. The qualitative data was transformed into quantitative data. The qualitative themes of the factors of time (i.e., management of time, and physical realms of time), father engagement (i.e. responsiveness, spending time together, observing child development, and observing firsts), support (i.e., needing support through comfortable environments and community, and not needing support), and parenting education programs (i.e., not participating because unaware, lack of availability, parenting should be natural, and participation because of positive outcomes and expanding of knowledge) were dichotomously scored for each participant as a theme that was present or not present in each participants responses. Table 8 illustrates the frequency of each theme for each factor.

Comparing Means of Fathering Themes

Each theme was dichotomously scored for each participant’s response. A Pearson r correlation test revealed that there were several statistically significant relationships between the theme variables and father involvement dimension variables (Appendix E). There was a correlation between physical realm of time and *attentiveness* ($r = -.315, p = .038$); observe child development and *mother support* ($r = .434, p = .004$); observe “firsts” and *mother support* ($r = -.472, p = .002$); need support and *attentiveness* ($r = -.376, p = .020$); and positive outcome with *discipline and teaching responsibility* ($r = .318, p = .048$) and *developing talents and future concerns* ($r = .320, p = .047$). An

Independent Samples *T*-Test was used to compare the means of father involvement for the theme variables of interest (i.e., physical realm of time, observe child development, etc.).

The Independent Samples *T*-Test revealed that there was a difference in *attentiveness* and whether or not fathers described time as a father as a physical realm of time, $t(41) = 2.476, p = .017$, which is based on a statistically significant Levene's Test that assumes that variance is not equal. In other words, the fathers recognized that they were less involved in daily routines and attending child's events when they discussed time in two physical realms: time at work and time at home. This suggests that fathers may find it challenging to carve time out of work to be more involved as a father in their child's daily routine.

The Independent Samples *T*-Test revealed that there is a difference in *mother support* and whether or not fathers described their favourable engagement as observing child development, $t(33) = 4.394, p = .000$, which is based on a statistically significant Levene's Test that assumes that variance is not equal. In other words, the fathers recognized that they were more involved in supporting the mother of their child when they discussed their favourite moment as a father to be observing their child grow and develop. The Independent Samples *T*-Test revealed that there is a difference in *mother support* and whether or not fathers described their favourable engagement as observing "firsts" of their child, $t(18) = 2.838, p = .011$, which is based on a statistically significant Levene's Test that assumes that variance is not equal.

Table 8

Frequency and Percentage of Qualitative Themes

Themes	N	Themes present in response	
		Frequency	Valid percent (%)
Management of time	44	30	68.2
Physical realms of time		28	63.6
Responsiveness of child	43	12	27.9
Spend time together (as a father)		12	27.9
Observe child development		13	30.2
Observe firsts		16	37.2
Responsiveness of father	43	4	9.3
Spend Time Together (with father)		31	72.1
Support Needed	39	23	60.5
No Support Needed		14	35.9
Unaware	40	9	23.1
Availability		3	7.5
Parenting is Natural		3	7.5
Positive Outcome		14	35.0
Expand Knowledge		6	15.0

In other words, fathers perceived themselves to be less involved in supporting the mother of their child when they discussed their favourite moment as a father to be observing the “first” moments of their child (e.g., birth, first word, first bike ride). These differences in support for mothers could be linked to the relationship with the mother in co-parenting and maternal gatekeeping.

The performance of the Independent Samples *T*-Test revealed that there is a difference in *attentiveness* and whether or not fathers needed support in their role as a father, $t(35) = 2.725, p = .010$, which is based on a statistically significant Levene’s Test that assumes that variance is not equal. In other words, the fathers perceived to be less involved in daily routine and attending child’s events when they discussed needing support in their role as a father (i.e., through creating comfortable environments for fathers, parent-friendly work policies). This means that there are fathers who need to be supported in their role and supported in their role as an attentive father.

Lastly, the performance of the Independent Samples *T*-Test revealed that there is a difference in *discipline and teaching responsibility*, $t(37) = 2.043, p = .048$, and *developing talents and future concerns*, $t(37) = 2.054, p = .047$, with whether or not fathers described the positive outcomes of participating in a parenting education program which is based on a Levene’s Test that was not statistically significant and assumes equal variances. Fathers recognized that they were more involved in discipline and setting rules, encouraging children to develop talents, and planning for their futures when fathers described the positive outcomes of participating in a parenting education program as a parent and for their child. This suggests that fathers who have participated in a parenting

education program and recognize the positive developmental outcomes perceive a greater involvement in future plans for their child and discipline.

Identifying Patterns of Theme Frequency and Demographic Variables

A Chi Square test was used to determine the distribution patterns of themes that exist in the demographic variables. First, it is important to note that several demographic variables did not display a pattern in the frequency of the themes including age of father, relationship status of father, city of residence, and ethnicity of father.

However, there is a relationship between the frequency of the engagement theme and age of the children of the father. Fathers with children of preschool age (0 to 3 years old) discussed responsive engagement with their children as their favourite moment less frequently than expected. Fathers who had more than one child between the ages of 0 to 6 discussed responsive engagement with their children more frequently than expected ($\chi^2 = 8.902, p = .012$). Possibly, mothers could have a stronger responsive relationship with infants and toddlers in early childhood affecting the type and frequency of engagement fathers have with their children. Fathers may be more inclined to favour moments of responsiveness with children given more opportunities to do so with more than one child.

There is a relationship between the frequency of the parenting education program themes and number of children. Fathers who had one child between the ages of 0 and 6 years old discussed parenting education programs in terms of expanding their knowledge less frequently than expected. Fathers who had two children between the ages of 0 and 6 discussed parenting education programs in terms of expanding their knowledge more frequently than expected ($\chi^2 = 8.515, p = .014$). Possibly, fathers with more than one child may have more opportunity or time to spend engaging with children in early childhood.

The value of parenting education programs as knowledge basins may be more evident to fathers who spend more time engaging with more than one child in early childhood and different times of child development.

The status of the father's participation in parenting education programs also highlighted some patterns of the frequency of the parenting education program themes. Fathers who did not participate in a parenting education program were unaware of such programing. Conversely, fathers who had participated in a parenting education program were well aware of parenting education programs ($\chi^2 = 7.313, p = .007$). Ideally, this confirms the status of their participation in these programs. Fathers who had not participated in parenting education program did not discuss as often the positive outcomes of the program. Fathers who had participated in a parenting education program discuss more frequently the positive outcomes of the program ($\chi^2 = 6.593, p = .010$). Also, fathers who had not participated in parenting education program did not discuss the expansion of knowledge gained from these programs; fathers who had participated in a parenting education program did discuss the expansion of knowledge ($\chi^2 = 11.765, p = .001$).

Finally, there is a pattern in the frequency of the parenting education themes and level of education of the father. Fathers who had less than a high school diploma discussed the expansion of knowledge received by participating in a parenting education program, while fathers with a high school diploma or higher did not discuss as frequently the expansion of knowledge through participation ($\chi^2 = 6.551, p = .038$). This suggests that fathers who have lower levels of education value the parenting knowledge delivered

of parenting education programs. Fathers with higher levels of education may be equipped with egalitarian practices in child rearing and care.

Interpretation of Findings

Three metathemes were highlighted as a component of the final analysis: (a) contemporary fathers, (b) engaging fathers, and (c) supporting fathers. These metathemes help to highlight the congruency of the qualitative and quantitative findings.

The Contemporary Father

In the 21st century, society challenges and expects fathers to share responsibilities with their spouses and to care and nurture their children. The dimensions of father involvement were reflected in the egalitarian role adopted by the Canadian fathers in the study and the converging roles shared with spouses. The fathers in this study reported a strong father involvement (i.e., with both traditional and contemporary dimensions) with their children in early childhood (i.e., dimension scores that were over 80%). There was a high predictability between the dimensions as well (i.e., an increase in involvement in *discipline and teaching responsibility* lead to an increase in involvement in *praise and affection*). The self-reported findings of the Canadian fathers of the study show that these fathers embraced these new contemporary expectations of father involvement and the multidimensional role of the father. However, the factor of time was deemed a challenge and consequence of the egalitarian role. The Canadian fathers in this study found time challenging as an involved parent and employee and/or professional. Fathers often took time off work to spend time with their child or used drives to and from daycare as time to spend with their child, in effort to balance work and family responsibilities. To confirm

this, the fathers who described time as two physical realms (i.e., work and home) recognized that they were less involved in the daily routines of their child.

Father and Child Interactions

Engagement is very important in terms of child development and attachment. Human infants are biologically predisposed to emit signals (i.e., cry, smile) to which adults was predisposed to respond to these signals. Positive parenting is the source of good parent–child relationships and parallels healthy attachment between the parent and the child. The Canadian fathers in this study shared that play-based activities and interactions with their children in early childhood were one of their favourite moments as a father. These activities were synonymous with recalled favourite moments with their own father. Interestingly, the fathers categorized “play” as a form of communication, and a form of warmth and nurturing (i.e., components of positive parenting) with their child. Other moments that were favoured by the fathers included moments of observation of child development and the child “firsts.” Fathers that described the child “firsts” as their favourite moment recognized a lower involvement in mother support, while the opposite was true of fathers who described child development as their favourite moment. Interestingly, responsive engagements were less favourable for fathers in early childhood. These responsive behaviours were reported less among fathers with children under 3 years old. Perhaps, the relationship the father has with the mother and maternal gatekeeping factors affect the type and amount of involvement the fathers have with their children.

Supporting Fathers

In the 21st century, fathers are challenged to fulfill a role as an egalitarian father. However, as much as society urges fathers to fulfill such a role, fathers are often under-supported. Approximately 20% of the Canadian fathers in the study felt supported by spouses and family. More than half of the participants expressed the need for additional support (i.e., creating a comfortable environment for dads). These fathers reported less father involvement in attentiveness (e.g., attending child's sports, school and church events, or being involved in their daily routine), compared to fathers who felt supported in their role already.

Parenting education programs can be used as a resource and support for fathers. Yet, the lack of awareness and availability of these programs act as barriers for fathers in Canada. Fathers who had previously participated in a parenting education program recognized positive outcomes for parent and child, and the opportunity to gain knowledge about parenting and child development. Fathers who recognized the positive outcomes of parenting education programs also had higher perceptions of involvement in discipline and teaching, and developing talents and the future of their child than fathers who did not recognize these outcomes. The depth of these metathemes and the correspondence to the proposed research questions are discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This final chapter will provide a summary of the previous chapters, a discussion of the results that were deemed significant, along with the emerging themes that were observed by the researcher, and a conclusion based on the responses to the research questions. The chapter will conclude with subsequent implications of this research in practice and theory, as well as suggestions for further research.

Summary of Research Document

This study, entitled *A Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry Into Positive Involvement Trends of Contemporary Fathers and Influence of Parenting Programs*, explored the trends of paternal involvement of fathers and participation in parenting education programs. The inquiry focused on the trends of paternal involvement in early childhood, juxtaposed with the impact of parenting education programs on the paternal involvement dimensions and conceptualization of the role of the father. The study sought to shed light on the effectiveness and perceived benefits of parenting education programs for fathers in comparison to mothers. Fifty-two fathers across Canada participated in the study; all were dads with young children 0 to 6 years old. The study employed a mixed methodology approach that was reflected in a father involvement and parenting education survey. The survey questionnaire sought to measure the nine dimensions of father involvement defined and developed by Hawkins et al. (2002) and the key aspects of the fathers' own conceptualization and perceptions of their roles.

Chapter 2 highlighted several important themes and theoretical orientations within fathering and parenting literature. The literature on paternal involvement emphasized the

important influence of fathers on early childhood development. The literature on parent education programs emphasized the importance of positive parenting and the need for universal access of parent education programs to be made available for all parents with preschool aged children. Several theoretical concepts of father involvement and parenting education programs highlight the multidimensional orientation and implications of parenting.

Chapter 3 discussed the study's research methodology in terms of the triangulation research design with a transformative model, the convenience sampling of participants, the research procedures, and the methodological assumptions and limitations. The methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation were also examined.

Finally, chapter 4 provided a brief profile of the fathers who participated in the study and the results of the survey questionnaire. The findings on the nine dimensions of father involvement were reported along with the emerging themes of the factors influencing the paternal role. The findings outlined the interrelated and complementary relationship between the quantitative and qualitative data to provide a clear inventory and conceptualization of strong paternal involvement and the influence parenting education programs.

Discussion

The study employed a mixed methodology to investigate the influence of parenting education programs on father involvement trends in early childhood. The study explored three specific research questions that were conclusively answered and embedded in the discussion of the metathemes, and the holistic implications of this study in the field of parenting and fathering research:

1. What dimensions of father involvement challenge the contemporary father? And how do the dimensions of father involvement impact each other?
2. How do fathers conceptualize their role as parent?
3. How does the conceptualization of the role of the father impact father involvement?

The Contemporary Father

Three patterns of father involvement have emerged in the last century and include the following roles: father as the breadwinner, father as the sex-role model, and more recently, the new nurturing father (Lamb, 2000; LaRossa, 1988; Pleck, 1997, 2004). As an extension of the new nurturing father, the 21st century challenges and expects fathers to share responsibilities with their spouses, in addition to caring for and nurturing their children. Many scholars have contributed to the development of a father involvement construct that captures involvement of an egalitarian father and good practices of fathering (Hawkins et al., 2002; Hawkins & Palkovitz, 1999; Lamb et al., 1985; Pleck, 2012). Recently, Hawkins et al. (2002) have built upon these ideals of the contemporary father and constructed the *Inventory of Father Involvement* (IFI). The IFI is a nine-dimensional model of father involvement that measures instrumental and the more traditional dimensions (providing; support of the mother; disciplining and teaching responsibility; and encouraging success in school) in addition to the dimensions that reflect tasks of a contemporary father (giving praise and affection; spending time together and talking; being attentive to their children's daily lives; reading to their children; and encouraging children to develop talents). These dimensions were reflected in the

egalitarian role adopted by Canadian fathers in the study and the converging roles shared with spouses.

The self-reported perceptions of the Canadian fathers in the study recognize the new contemporary expectations of paternal involvement and the role in question. Each participant was given a score out of 100% based on his perception of how good of a job he did within the last 12 months, and the mean score of each dimension was well over 80% for the fathers in the study. There was no statistical significant difference between the scores of fathers who had previously participated in a parenting education program and those who did not previously participate in a parenting education program.

Most of the IFI dimensions, with the exception of *providing*, were positively associated with each other with predictive qualities. This suggests that Canadian fathers are capable of fulfilling this role as an egalitarian father, with equal responsibility as their spouses for childcare and nurturing. For instance, recognized involvement in praise and affection predicted recognized involvement in discipline and teaching responsibilities. This suggests that the time fathers spend praising and displaying affection is similar to the spent on discipline and teaching responsibility. Guajardo, Snyder, and Petersen (2009) and Kelly and Lamb (2000) conclude similar results in their studies on parental praise and discipline. Also, the Canadian fathers' high perceptions of involvement in the time they spend with their child predicted the high perceptions of involvement in future concerns and talent development of the child. This is supported by the study conducted by Rowe et al. (2004) on fathers' communication with their children. Therefore, ideally, the dimensions of father involvement are interconnected, as they are all crucial components of a multidimensional and broader construct of cognitive, affective,

behavioural, and moral dimensions. These contributions to father involvement answer Research Question 1.

Research Question 2 considers several factors of paternal involvement that challenge the egalitarian Canadian fathers. The social ecology model can be used to model the factors influencing father involvement (Belsky, 1984; Bronfenbrenner, 1994). This model highlights several levels that are sought to characterize the goals, strengths, needs, and challenges of fathers. This includes the microsystem (i.e., father one-on-one engagement), the mesosystem (i.e., community level structures), and the exosystem (i.e., institutions, policies, and legislation) levels. Evidently, paternal functioning has multiple determinants including the sources of stresses (e.g., work) and support (e.g., wife) that ultimately shape parenting and the parent–child relationship (Belsky, 1984). In light of this model, the converging roles, and egalitarian roles, between mothers and fathers have had fathers taking on more tasks in household duties and childcare, whereas mothers took on paid work (Parker & Wang, 2013). The Canadian fathers (68%) in this study focus on the management of time as an involved parent and as an employee and/or professional. Also, approximately 60% of Canadian fathers described time in two physical realms. These fathers had a significantly lower recognition of involvement in daily routines and attending child’s events, in comparison to fathers who did not describe time in two physical realms. Nonetheless, there were a variety of remedies expressed by the fathers in order to avoid the limitations of time. Fathers planned time away from work to attend child’s extracurricular activities, taking drives to and from daycare, and time before bed to spend together.

This study also highlighted that historical constructs of the “good father” were still rooted in the contemporary fatherhood involvement role, alluding to the fact that these various traditional father roles can still exist today in our pluralistic society (Lamb, 2000). Approximately 12% of fathers in this study expressed the difficulty of working a full-time schedule in conjunction to being a father. Although full-time work lessened time for father involvement, the financial stability of full-time work was deemed valuable to their family. Similarly, Henwood and Procter (2003) found that among first-time fathers, there was a sense of powerful identity still attached to the provider role, in addition to taking into account the new paternal involvement model. The studies of the Pew Research Centre showed that there are still gender role differences that exist (Parker & Wang, 2013). Fathers are more likely than mothers to want full-time work, and mothers who work full-time are more concerned with flexible schedules; whereas fathers are more concerned with having a high-paying job (Parker & Wang, 2013). Nonetheless, the contemporary perspective is maintained by Canadian fathers in the study through the management of time and the recognition of father involvement and care in early childhood.

Father and Child Interactions

Engagement is a valuable component of the father involvement construct. Lamb et al. (1985) defined interaction as the direct contact a father has with his children. Types of interactions or engagements include caregiving (e.g., changing diapers), physical playing (e.g., tickling, playing peek-a-boo), and cognitive stimulation (e.g., such as reading, singing) (Cabrera, Hofferth, & Chae, 2011). Theoretically, these types of engagement are very important in terms of child development and attachment, seeing as

infants are biologically predisposed to emit signals (e.g., cry, smile) to which adults responds. Healthy attachments between the parent and child are promoted through positive parenting. The findings of Schoppe-Sullivan, Kotila, Jia, Lang, and Bower (2013) and Yoshida (2012) highlight that play-based interactions are the main type of interactions that fathers engage in with their children. Physical interactions and play-based activities were most favoured among the Canadian fathers in this study. These activities were synonymous with recalled favourite moments with their own father. This is not surprising since Guzzo (2011) addresses that most men's commitment and attitudes towards fatherhood are reflected and influenced by the relationship and past experiences of their own fathers. Interestingly, the fathers categorized "play" as a form of communication, and form of warmth and nurturing (i.e., components of positive parenting) of their child. These findings support factors that shape the conceptualization of the role of the father proposed of Research Question 2.

The responsiveness of caregiving and dyadic interactions were less favourable among the Canadian fathers with their children. This type of engagement was shared even less between favoured moments the men had with their own fathers. More specifically, these favourable moments were less common among fathers with children 3 years old and younger. Schoppe-Sullivan et al. (2013) suggest that fathers may perceive the role of the mother as the responsive caregiver as being more important during early childhood. Moreover, Yeung et al. (2001) highlight that fathers are less likely to engage in learning and educational activities with children. This may not have been true for the Canadian fathers in the study, as they identified "reading" as a positive parenting practice within the dimension of communication.

Also in response to Research Question 2, observational engagements were moments that were most favoured among fathers of children in early childhood. These are moments that were identified by the researcher as instances that fathers were not directly engaged with their children. These moments include birth, first bike ride, first step, first word, and watching their child develop. Furthermore, in respect to Research Question 3, there was a difference in these observational engagements and the self-reports of perception of involvement in support for the mother. Fathers who favoured moments of child development—watching their child learn, talk, and solve problems—had a significantly higher recognition for the support of mothers. Fathers who favoured their child’s first moments—birth, first word, and first bike ride—had significantly less recognition for the support of mothers. Ideally, the quality and type of relationship shared between the father and mother can shape the type of interactions father have with their child (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2008).

Supporting Fathers

The 21st century challenges fathers to take on a more egalitarian role (i.e., share child care and domestic duties with spouse). However, as much as society urges fathers to fulfill such a role, fathers are often undersupported. Saracho and Spodek (2008) referred to fathers as the “hidden parent,” and this statement seems to resonate highly in the minimal support fathers receive and the lack of support available to them, as a first-time father or as fatherhood evolves over his lifetime. Although the recent attention on father engagement and involvement research has advised communities to tailor to the needs and support of fathers, the six programs listed on the “Mississauga Parent and Resource Centre” (see <http://www.mpcrc.ca/>) are still tailored to mothers and their children.

Theoretically, this concept is rooted in Belsky's (1984) model that combines the theoretical orientations of the family systems and social ecological model, with a focus on parental mental health and family relationships. Russell et al. (2011) reported that fathers being supported by their partners were more likely to report levels of positive parenting. Approximately 20% of the Canadian fathers who participated in the study addressed that their spouses and respective family supported them in their role as a father. Yet, more than half of the Canadian fathers in the study are not supported in their role as a father. In this study, the fathers who needed support reported less involvement in attending child's sports, school, and church events, or being involved in their daily routine. This finding answers Research Question 3. Ideally, supporting fathers is an integral factor in the daily routines of their child, which may include being a friend to their child, or learning to manage time to attend sports, church, or school events with child; this may improve the quality of father involvement and confidence of the father. Similarly, the Pew Research Centre found that parents who had difficulty balancing work and family reported lower parenting satisfaction (Parker & Wang, 2013).

Typically it is only after the birth of a child that the realities of parenting set in, and fathers begin to recognize the supports they may need to fulfill the role of an involved father (Goodman, 2005). However, this support is an important factor not only for new fathers but also over the course of fatherhood as multiple adjustments to both cognitive and behavioural engagement with their families are required (Palkovitz & Palm, 2009). In this study, approximately 25% of fathers addressed that comfortable environments (e.g., father-friendly programs, and online venues) are needed to support father involvement. Ideally, creating a comfortable environment to share experiences of

parenting is needed in early childhood fathering. Similarly, Devolin et al. (2012) reported that informal sources of support were rated as more valuable than formal supports.

Parenting education programs are community resources and supports that are available to both parents, yet perhaps the weakness of parenting programs results from a lack of awareness and availability (Devolin et al., 2012). However, approximately 30% of Canadian fathers had previously participated in parenting education programs. In response to Research Question 2, parenting education programs were deemed a valuable resource for parenting knowledge and the support for positive outcomes of both parent and child development. Also, in respect to Research Question 3, the Canadian fathers who attended parent education programs addressed the positive outcomes linked to these programs. Fathers who attended a parenting education program for the linked positive outcome had a higher involvement in discipline and teaching, and developing the talents and future of their children. Perhaps these programs are valuable supports and resources for fathers to prepare for their child's future and positive parenting approaches.

Implications for Practice

There are several implications of this study for practice. The type of programming available to fathers should consider more informal settings for disseminating fathering information. The value of formal supports for parents was rated slightly less useful when juxtaposed with informal supports for parents, especially in early childhood (Devolin et al., 2012). In this study it appears that group, face-to-face settings need to be organized, in addition to current formal education courses, to create and provide spaces for fathers to share experiences and challenges. Including male educators and peer leaders can help create a more comfortable environment for fathers to learn and share. Additionally,

online and social media venues allow fathers to be a part of groups and online forums in ways that fit with their schedules. Online forums provide equal opportunities for fathers to connect and access information during their available times. Time is a valuable and important factor to fathers in this study and the online forms have the potential to create a flexible space for fathers to engage with each other outside work and time with their children. Also, combining online mediums with drop-in settings, in addition to formal parenting education programs, can only strengthen the available resources to support fathers in their role.

Implications for Theory

The study's findings add to current literature on father involvement and early childhood education. The Canadian fathers in this study embraced the new egalitarian role (Hawkins et al., 2002; Lamb, 2000; Pleck, 1997; Lamb, 2000). However, as fathers embrace this new role and the responsibilities that come with it, the challenge of time becomes a major concern for contemporary fathers who work full-time. These findings concur with the Pew Research Centre results of modern parents trying to find a balance between work and family (Parker & Wang, 2013). Supporting fathers' involvement has become increasingly more important and valuable to insure that support is available and maintained pre- and post-birth of the child, and as the father changes during his lifetime of fatherhood (Goodman, 2005; Palkovitz & Palm, 2009). Parenting education programs are avenues of resource and support for new and current parents (Devolin et al., 2012; Fletcher et al., 2011; OMHP, 2010). However, the effectiveness of these programs has had a dampened impact on fathers (Fletcher et al., 2011; Lundahl et al., 2008). Therefore, ensuring that programs are available to educate fathers and that these programs are

continually being developed is significant. Fathers appear to value programs that emphasize father–child activity programs most frequently, and these programs typically emphasize activity-based play and are orientated around father–child interactions (Hoffman, 2011). In this study, the fathers also expressed the need for supports that create more comfortable environments for fathers.

Implications for Further Research

In conclusion, this study leads to further research implications in father involvement, and parenting education programs and supports. The health and quality of the marital relationship is important to father involvement. Additional research to explore maternal perceptions of father involvement, as a predictor of father involvement with child, and in community resources and support, like parenting education programs is required to fully understand parental interactions. A cross-sectional exploration of the quality of this relationship can be considered during the pre- and post-birth of the child. The value of this research is important for future promotion and implementation of programing.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study draws a closure to the exploration of the trends of paternal involvement of fathers and participation in parenting education programs. The study employed a mixed methods approach to father involvement and parenting research. In this study, the perceptions held within the homogenous sample of fathers highlighted that there remains no universal way to father. Time and available supports are important factors that need to be considered in the role of contemporary fathers and the participation of these fathers in parent education programs. The importance of father

involvement and the role of the father should not only be recognized in early childhood but all stages of child health and development. Therefore, a review of the results uncovered in this study helped to provide a clearer picture on “good fathering” in the 21st century and the influence of parenting education programs and community support, yet it also heightens and deepens the complexity that still exists within this realm of research.

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Appendix A

Inventory of Father Involvement Survey

Thank you for taking the time to address and complete the following questionnaire survey. The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please note that all information provided is considered confidential. All responses will be considered as an average of the entire group of participants and you will not be identified individually in any way in the written report of the research. You may choose to withdraw from participation by simply logging off and the incomplete survey will be disregarded. If you choose to voluntarily participate in the study, please complete the survey to finish. Survey results will be disclosed for thesis completion and to the local community to continue improving community health and development. Thank you.

- Age**
- ☐ Under 18 ☐ 19-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44
☐ 45-54 ☐ Over 55
- Relationship Status**
- ☐ Married ☐ Common Law ☐ Divorced/ Separated ☐ Same Sex

**Age of children and
Number of children at each age**

- ☐ 0 _____
☐ 1 _____
☐ 2 _____
☐ 3 _____
☐ 4 _____
☐ 5 _____
☐ 6 _____

**Previous participation
in parent education
program**

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the name of the program

City _____

Ethnicity

☐ Chinese ☐ Caucasian ☐ Latin American ☐ South East Asian ☐ Aboriginal
☐ South Asian ☐ Black ☐ Filipino ☐ Arab ☐ Other

Education

☐ Less than Grade 8 ☐ Grade 8 ☐ High School Diploma ☐ University Degree or College Diploma

The completion of the survey will require you to think of your experience as a father over the past 12 months. Please rate how good of a job you think you did as a father on each of the items below. If the item is not applicable to your situation, circle “NA” for not applicable.

The responses below are choices 0 through 6, with 0 anchored by “Very Poor” and 6 anchored by “Excellent” and “NA” also as a response choice.

Disciplining and Monitoring of Child

Excellent Very Poor

1. Attending events your children participate in (sports, school, church events)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
2. Providing your children’s basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, and health care)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
3. Being involved in the daily or regular routine of taking care of your children’s basic needs or activities (feeding, driving them places, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
4. Accepting responsibility for financial support of the children you have fathered	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
5. Knowing where your children go and what they do with their friends	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
6. Cooperating with your children’s mother in the rearing of your children	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA

7. Teaching your children to follow rules at school	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
8. Disciplining your children	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
9. Helping your older children with their homework	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
10. Planning for your children's future (education, training)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
11. Encouraging your children to do their chores	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
12. Setting rules and limits for your children's behaviour	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA

What are some examples of discipline and monitoring you provide for your child as a father?

Communicating with Child

Very Poor

Excellent

13. Telling your children that you love them	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
14. Letting your children know that their mother is important and special person	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
15. Encouraging your children to read	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
16. Spending time just talking with your children when they want to talk about something	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
17. Reading to your younger children	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA

What are some examples of ways you communicate with your child as their father?

Nurturing and Shared Warmth with Child

Very Poor

Excellent

18. Praising your children for being good or doing the right thing	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
19. Giving your children's mother encouragement and emotional support	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
20. Praising your children for something they have done well	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
21. Encouraging your children to succeed in school	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
22. Being a pal or friend to children	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
23. Encouraging your children to do their homework	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
24. Encouraging your children to continue their schooling beyond high school	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
25. Encouraging your children to develop their talents (music, athletics, art, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA
26. Spending time with your children doing things they like to do	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	NA

What are some examples of nurture and warmth you share with your child as their father?

Please provide a written response for the following questions.

27. How does time factor into your role as a father?

28. Describe your favourite moment as a father.

29. Describe moments spent with your own father as a child.

30. What kind of supports would you like to have as a dad to help you in your role?

31. Why did you decide to attend the parenting education programs? And what components of the program made your participation enjoyable (i.e. content,

delivery, setting, partner or community support, etc.)?

If you did not attend a parenting education program, please describe why not?

32. Additional Comments

If you wish to access the final results of the study, they will be made available to you at your participating community site, but inquiring about the results may disclose your participation in the research.

Thank you for your participation and contribution and if there are any additional comments or concerns, please feel free to contact Stephanie Tukonic at st10xc@brocku.ca.

Appendix B

Poster Invitation

The Positive Power of Dads: A Survey on Father Involvement



Do you have a child or children between the ages of 0 to 6?
Take the time to participate in a positive father involvement survey at:
<http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/dharwood/inventory-of-father-involvement-survey/>
Before January 31st, 2013

Your participation is incredibly appreciated and has the potential to help further this field of study. Thank you!

Appendix C

Electronic Invitation

You, a father of a child between the ages of zero to six, have been invited to participate in a research study entitled *A Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiry into the Positive Involvement Trends of Contemporary Fathers and Influence of Parenting Programs*. I, Stephanie Tukonic, a Master of Education student at Brock University, am conducting this study in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Education. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the trends of positive father involvement and the implications of these trends for future parenting education programs. The study involves the completion of a survey that should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The completion of the survey will require you to think of your experience as a father over the past 12 months. In addition, the survey will require you to think of your role as a father and describe components that contribute to your paternal involvement.

The questions can be accessed through Fluid Survey, an online survey software program, for your convenience. The researchers will not be present for the completion of the survey. You may withdraw from the survey at any time by simply logging off and the incomplete survey will be disregarded. Please note that participation is completely voluntary. All responses to survey questions are valuable and will be kept confidential and anonymous, and you will not be asked to identify yourself in any way. All data collected from the survey will be stored a password protected computer belonging to the principal student investigator. Access to the data files will be restricted to the student principal investigator and faculty supervisor until August, 2013, at which point the data files will be destroyed. Survey results have the potential to be disclosed for thesis completion, publication, and presentation to the academic and local community in effort to continue improving community health and development.

To participate in the survey please following the steps below before January 31st, 2013:

1. Go to <http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/dharwood/inventory-of-father-involvement-survey/>
2. Please fill in all the necessary questions and click 'submit' at the end of the survey

Thank you,

Stephanie Tukonic
Principal Student Investigator
St10xc@brocku.ca

Appendix D

Pearson r Correlation for Demographic Variables and

Father Involvement Dimensions

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Discipline and Teaching Responsibility	-.092	-.025	-.088	-.101	-.022	-.050	-.029	.114
School Encouragement	-.064	.066	.029	-.064	-.139	-.328	-.066	.225
Mother Support	-.277	-.261	-.076	.026	-.126	-.119	-.080	.127
Providing	-.060	.118	.073	-.058	.152	-.173	-.034	-.133
Time and Talking Together	-.308*	-.008	-.234	-.142	.036	-.220	.263	-.037
Praise and Affection	-.329*	.066	-.100	-.026	.101	.072	-.175	-.106
Developing Talents and Future Concerns	-.034	.055	-.095	-.030	-.101	-.076	.355*	.049
Reading and Homework Support	-.099	.119	-.072	.005	-.146	-.169	.084	-.039
Attentiveness	-.110	.204	.068	.001	.037	-.127	-.126	.071

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: The following letters are for the corresponding demographic variable: (a) Age, (b) Relationship Status, (c) Age of Children, (d) Number of Children, (e) Participation in a Parenting Education Program, (f) Ethnicity, (g) Education Level, (h) Location of residence.

Appendix E

Pearson r Correlation for Qualitative Themes and Father Involvement Dimensions

Qualitative Themes	IFI Dimensions								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Management of Time	-.004	.312	.163	-.111	-.034	.070	.146	.002	-.243
Physical Realms of Time	.091	-.221	-.139	-.026	-.130	-.026	-.164	-.209	-.315*
Responsiveness of Child	-.026	-.047	-.099	-.001	-.120	.013	.042	.036	-.258
Spend Time Together (as a Father)	.032	.309	-.015	.234	.132	.195	-.056	.247	.110
Observe Child Development	-.183	.249	.434**	-.097	.229	.048	.006	.142	.114
Observe Firsts	.034	-.310	-.472**	-.052	-.294	-.132	-.022	-.265	-.177
Spend Time Together (with Father)	-.039	-.114	-.113	-.234	-.008	-.129	.052	-.076	-.190
Responsiveness of Father	-.092	.194	-.006	.121	.138	.088	.239	.164	.171
Support Needed	.013	-.421	-.317	-.094	-.318	-.046	.121	-.012	-.376*
No Support Needed	.155	.350	.255	.181	.218	.148	-.030	-.050	.294
Unaware	.112	-.108	.144	.085	-.167	-.224	-.073	-.197	.022
Availability	-.185	.104	.046	-.097	.052	-.098	-.177	.138	-.100
Parenting is Natural	-.084	.217	.212	.112	.178	.180	.097	.090	.205
Positive Outcome	.318*	.292	.146	.057	.090	.268	.320*	.131	.172
Expand Knowledge	-.097	-.200	-.015	.165	-.134	.005	-.261	-.049	-.155

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: The following letters correspond to each dimension of the *Inventory of Father Involvement*: (a) *Discipline and Teaching Responsibility*, (b) *School Encouragement*, (c) *Mother Support*, (d) *Providing*, (e) *Time and Talking Together*, (f) *Praise and Affection*, (g) *Developing Talents and Future*, (h) *Reading and Homework Support*, and (i) *Attentiveness*.